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Calvinist Contact

Christmas issue 1983

See who all is, yet so small is

Second Class Mail, printed in Canada; postage paid at St. Catharines, Ont. and Lewiston, N.Y. — see page 2 December 2, 1983; No. 1906

Calvinist Contact

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Advertising
Display advertising deadline is Wednesday noon of the preceding week. Classified advertising deadline is Thurs. 8:30 a.m. for the next week's issue. See classified page for rates.
Subscriptions
$22.50 for 47 issues. $42.50 for 94 issues. Airmail $75.00 for 47 issues.
Calvinist Contact is published by Knight Publishing Ltd., 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON.

Canada mail: Second class mail registration No. 0-0451. Postage paid at St. Catharines, Ontario. Postmaster: Send address changes to Calvinist Contact, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3.

U.S. Mail: Calvinist Contact (USPS 518-090), published weekly except for July 15, July 29, August 12, August 26, and December 30, by K.Knight Publishing Limited, 99 Niagara St.,St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3. Second class postage paid at Lewiston, N.Y.14092.

Head Office: 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3. Phone:(416) 682-8311. Office hours: 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Editorial

What does Isaiah 9 mean to godless nations?

Jesus is called the Prince of Peace in Isaiah 9. That's not something that's easily or well understood in our culture.

The Sawi people of West Irian (formerly Netherlands New Guinea) have maintained a tradition that helps them come to grips with this title in a way that might make us jealous.

Sealing the peace with a child

Missionary Don Richardson describes in his book *The Peace Child* how the Sawi have a tradition of sealing a peace between warring tribes by giving and accepting a baby. Such a baby is called a peace child.

Imagine the pain the parents of such a child experience when they part with their little baby. The mother often screams in protest when the grim-faced father snatches the baby from her and quickly carries it across a field to a group of opposing warriors.

The peace established in this fashion is sacred and cannot be broken during the life time of the peace child.

The white man does not know about the peace child?

Richardson questioned one of the Sawi warriors about this practice, which he saw being applied before his very eyes, while the sorrowing mother moaned, like Rachel of the Bible not wanting to be comforted.

The Sawi warrior was astounded. Did the white man not know about this practice? But suddenly a light went on in his mind; "Of course, you white people don't have wars, that's why you don't know about the peace child.

The Sawi warrior was wrong about the war part, but right about the fact that white people don't know about the peace child. As a matter of fact, their ignorance explains why they do have wars.

Missionary Richardson was able to explain that Jesus Christ was the one and only peace child that was ever needed. Jesus established a peace between God and people that could not be broken. God too cried like the mother when his son was taken from him. But He knew that the peace could not be established without this giving up of his son.

The Sawi embraced the gospel with amazing eagerness after they saw that Christ was a better peace child than they had ever given or taken.

No law outside of man

That Christ is the perfect peace child is difficult to get across to modern, warring or warlike nations. There is not a nation in the world today that would bind itself by the mere exchange of a peace child. Modern nations do not have that sense of honour and respect for something outside themselves.

Ever since the French Revolution the social contract theory has replaced the concept of the law of God as the binding force for national and international behaviour.

The only way one can establish a form of peace in this world is to appeal to a nation's self interest. Mutual disarmament, for example, will only take place if the opposing factions will benefit from it.

Why the PM does not quote Isaiah 9

Prime Minister Trudeau is on a world-wide peace mission these days. We can be sure that he will make no mention of a peace child while on his mission. He will point out the futility and danger of nuclear escalation. What else can he say?

What does one say to godless nations like Canada, the U.S., The Soviet Union, China, Japan, who concern themselves not with the matter of true peace but primarily with the standard of living. They will resort to whatever is needed to maintain or boost that standard; war if need be, but preferably the absence of it.

Does one say, "Until us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called ... the Prince of Peace?

Catching the postal demon off guard

This year's Christmas issue is a week earlier compared to other years. No, we're not following the commercializing trend which likes to stretch the season out for weeks on end just to cash in on "the spirit of giving."

We're doing this to avoid what happened last year. Some of our subscribers received the Christmas issue towards the end of January, compliments of Canada Post. It seems that anything mailed second class after the first week in December is put on a sled and bidden dogspeed.

Another reason for wanting the Christmas issue out early is that sunday school teachers look forward to suitable reading material which they can use for their Christmas programs. Getting it early helps them prepare well.

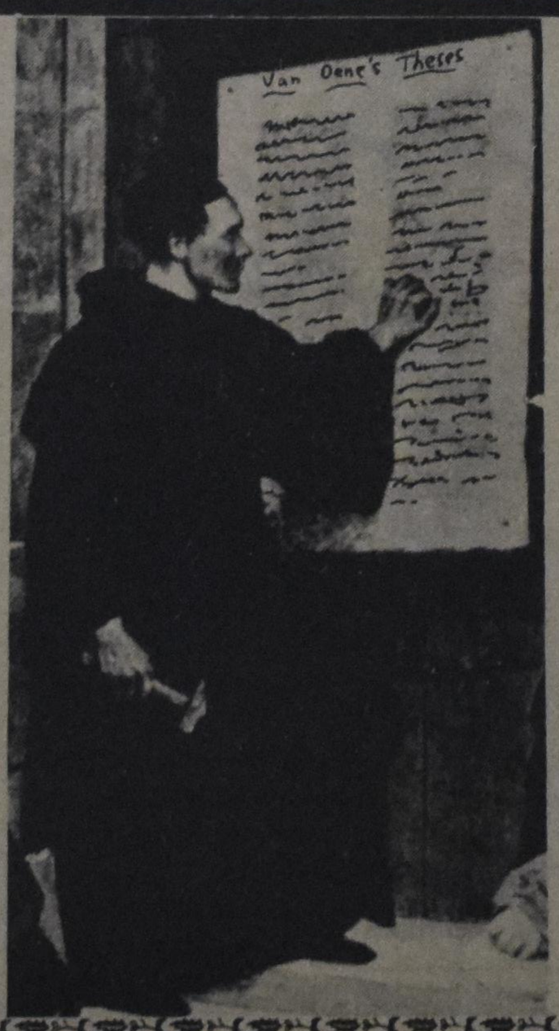
So with this, we wish our issue godspeed. May it arrive in good time in Nova Scotia as well as in British Columbia, in The Netherlands as well as in California.

God rest you merry, gentlefolks, as you enter the Advent season.

Letters

Front page design

The nativity scene is from an original free-hand scissors cutting by artist Lini R. Grol, Fonthill, Ont. Lini Grol is also a poet and writer. Her *Heartsongs — a Mother's Book of Memories* features her poems and scissor cuttings. In October of this year she published *Liberation*, a personal account of a family going through the last year of World War II in Nymegen, The Netherlands.



Likes Van Oene's theses

I have enjoyed very much some of the articles you have printed lately in the *Calvinist Contact*.

Two that come to mind are "Sounding an alarm for Christian Education" by Dick Pierik and "Plea for a vital ministry in the church" by W. Van Oene.

Van Oene's article is one that should be tacked on the door of the Christian Reformed Church (and others) in the same manner that Luther tacked his thesis to the Roman Catholic Church door.

I would pray that it wouldn't cause a split though; but that it would bring about a time of prayer and fasting for the whole church; from Synod to the local congregations, to seriously consider what has been said and to look for God's directions.

Vivian Bylsma,
Osgoode, Ont.

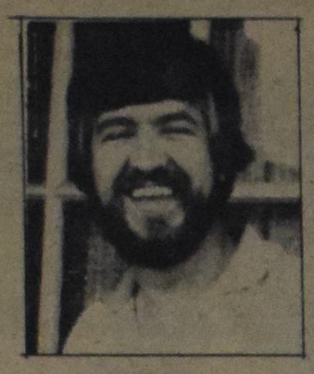
Calvinist Contact not up to snuff, what!

Enclosed, reluctantly, a one-year renewal from a long-time reader and subscriber.

I was disappointed by the reduction of the Dutch language content. I much prefer the flavour and resonance of Dutch. The literary quality of English used by most of your contributors, as well as staff, is considerably below the polished prose, incisive wit, and native fluency of the English journals I savour. Tuyl and Wolters, so trenchant and apt in Dutch, manage to sound somewhat flat and contrived in English.

I am also becoming increasingly fed up with the hackneyed socialist and feminist drivel emanating from the fever swamps

JUST A MOMENT/HERMAN PRAAMSMA



'Christmas itself may be called into question
If carried so far it creates indigestion'
(Ralph Bergengren, 1871 — 1947, **The Unwise Christmas**)

Not too long now and it will be Christmas again. Time to decorate the house, time to rehearse for special programs, time to go shopping and carolling. Already we are exhorted from every side that there are only so many shopping days left before the big event.

Not too long anymore now — yet perhaps much too long. Not only will carols and Santa Claus music indiscriminately assault our eardrums again in every shopping plaza, but sermons will tirelessly warn us against this secularization process.

Not only will catalogues and flyers continue to arrive in our mailboxes, but the pulpit will once again unwearyingly point out the evils of a materialistic spirit, and point to the great Gift which is ours on Christmas Day.

Old arguments will surface about decorating or not decorating the church, giving gifts or not giving gifts, and whether or not December fifth should be maintained as a viable, though somewhat ethnic, alternative.

Maybe it's a sign of getting older, but I get tired already when I think of the whole business. Maybe that has something to do with the fact that Christmas time is the 'busy time' for pastors. And that in that busy time you should say something new about something old. Without using cliches, preferably.

How can you be fresh, as it were, in this old season?

Perhaps it is time to try something new with your family. Make it a point to attend Christmas services in one of your local hospitals or old age manors. Take up a common family project, such as the making of one or more Christmas banners, either for your own church, your home, or as a gift (maybe for the hospital?) Make something personal for another member of the family, expressing the meaning of Christmas. Invite a student, away from home, to share your home.

What a lot of preachy advice from a middle-aged, tired person, huh?

But the most amazing thing about this whole season I haven't told you yet. And that is quite simply that in spite of repetition and tiredness the message always comes through anyway. Somehow. The message of a rich God Who became poor for sinners.

That comes through in spite of all the other things, in spite of repetitious programs, sermons made in the quiet desperation of the wee hours, in spite of all the old familiar things that return year after year. In that I see God's grace.

And I'm encouraged, entering this new Advent season.

Herman Praasma is pastor of the Fellowship Christian Reformed Church in Rexdale, Ont.

There is a difference even in injustices

Permit me to comment briefly on the editorial by Gerald Vandezande (Nov. 11 issue) and the Rev. Carl Tuyl's observations re Grenada (Nov. 4 issue).

Vandezande rightly rejects the violent regimes of Central America. But it seems to me his judgment is lacking balance and discernment when he denounces the oppressive regimes in El Salvador and Guatemala, while remaining all but silent on the equally tyrannical regimes (this time marxist) in Cuba and Nicaragua.

I echo his probing question as to the right of an oppressed people to resort to armed resistance. My tentative answer to that question (as I think will be his also) is that such resistance is not necessarily and always un-christian.

However, there is a difference between the armed resistances in El Salvador and Nicaragua. While the former is marxist-ispired and communist-backed, the latter is at least partially a group that broke with the ruling and increasingly tyrannical communist government of Nicaragua.

The marxist guerillas in El Salvador are attempting to overthrow their democratically-elected, albeit despotic government and replace it with a Cuba-style dictatorship, whereas some of the underground forces in Nicaragua (those led by Pastora) seek the establishment of a genuine democratic system.

Ed Vanderkloet,
Rexdale, Ont.

Gerald Vandezande responds

I wrote the article "Violence requires difficult decisions" (C.C., Nov. 11, 1983) after hearing quite a few Guatemalan and Salvadoran refugees describe in horrifying detail how their governments and armies oppressed and persecuted them and their neighbours before they fled to Mexico. As well, I learned much from the first-hand reports by christian friends and acquaintances in North America and Western Europe who recently visited El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. Furthermore, I have benefitted from the findings and recommendations of reputable MPs who investigated the conditions in these countries.

These reports voiced deep concern about the worsening oppression in El Salvador and Guatemala. They also stressed the need for more freedom of expression in Nicaragua and for its right to national independence and self-defense against aggression by the U.S.-supported counter-revolutionaries operating out of Honduras. They mentioned that the government of Nicaragua includes Marxists as well as Christians, although none of them branded these rulers, as you do, as an "increasingly tyrannical, communist government." On the contrary, they reported *steadily decreasing* human rights violations in Nicaragua and *alarmingly increasing* violence in El Salvador and Guatemala.

The primary point of my article was to raise the basic question as to whether people, when they are being persecuted by their *own* oppressive government (no matter whether it is "rightist" or "leftist"), may ever resort to weapons in self-defense, after they have tried all peaceful means to obtain an equitable settlement of grave injustices.

The answer to this question ultimately depends on whether we think a government actually functions as "God's servant for their good" or whether it is "a terror to good conduct" (cf. *Romans* 13:1-7). I'm sure we all agree that a government should "punish those who do wrong and praise those who do right" (cf. *I Peter* 2:14).

However, according to the refugees I met in southern Mexico, the Guatemalan and Salvadoran governments do the very opposite: they "punish" (even kill) those who seek justice and "praise" (protect) those who torture and massacre people who seek to live in peace and freedom. I shall never forget these tales of terror.

Accordingly, I seriously doubt that we should tell the people in Guatemala that they may "resort to armed resistance" because their totalitarian government was established via a military coup, but that we in good conscience can advise the people in El Salvador that they may not do so, because — as you contend — their "despotic" government was "democratically elected" (whatever that meant/means in El Salvador).

Nor may we argue, as you seem to imply, that it is *right* to use arms against a "tyrannical" leftist or communist government, but that it is *wrong* to do so when a rightist or capitalist government uses violence to control the people and stay in power. A *dictatorship's ideology* neither justifies its bad behaviour nor determines a people's right to armed resistance. This problem must be resolved on the basis of a *biblical principle*, I think.

Shalom!

Gerald Vandezande,
Agincourt, Ont.

of the ecclesiastical left-wingers. Please keep that silly posturing out of our paper. We are not edified or amused by those who find it necessary to re-interpret, if not rewrite, the Bible every time some secular neophiliac has some misguided brainwave.

Jack van Arragon,
Atikokan, Ont.

Unfair to ask courts to regulate church matters

Is that fair journalism to splash on your paper (Oct. 7) the church discipline of the Canadian Reformed Church?

Must the new Constitution in the courts of Canada decide church discipline?

God in Jesus Christ instituted the church and by his sovereign Word regulated church matters.

Editor, you are asking for trouble in your own church when, like in Russia, the courts decide church matters, and the government of Canada will take away the freedom of worship and discipline.

E.A. Human,
Smithers, BC

It wasn't my idea to take the Selles case to court!

Editor

Pontius' Puddle

CHRISTMAS IS SUCH AN INSINCERE TIME. EMPTY EULOGIES,
FALSE FLATTERY. ONE CAN'T BELIEVE A THING ONE IS TOLD.
HERE, PONTIUS. IT'S OUR WAY OF THANKING YOU FOR BEING SUCH A GREAT LEADER.
ONE MUST, OF COURSE, ALLOW FOR THE OCCASIONAL EXCEPTION.

News

CLAC goes to court on freedom of association

Ben Vandezande

REXDALE, Ont. — The Christian Labour Association of Canada is going to bring another case to court in January. This time the forum will be the Ontario Court of Appeals and the issue will be freedom of association.

A year ago the Ontario government introduced the sweeping Inflation Restraint Act which extended all collective agreements for one year. There were objectors. The Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) wanted the whole Act declared unconstitutional.

The CLAC got into the action because they argued that the Inflation Restraint Act meant that no union may "raid" another collective agreement. This position was upheld.

A month ago the Divisional Court of Ontario handed down its decision stating that it was in fact unconstitutional for the government to remove collective bargaining by the Inflation Restraint Act. Such a move violated the guarantee of freedom of association in the Charter of Rights and freedoms. According to the court, the goal of restraining wages had little to do with the broader goal of collective bargaining.

The CLAC agrees with that decision. Recently, the Ontario government decided to defend the constitutionality of its Inflation Restrain Act to the Ontario Court of Appeal. After several days of intense debate, the CLAC decided to throw its hat into the ring.

This case may well be precedent-setting by spelling out what freedom of association means in the Charter. If the government wins the appeal it could mean "a hollowing out of freedom of association" according to Fred Heerema, business agent of the CLAC.

At stake as well is the right of the government to shape labour legislation. Does it have a free hand? Or to reverse the question, does the decision mean that *nothing* can be changed in labour law?

Continued battle for freedom

The CLAC was started around the issue of freedom of association. Thirty years later, the meaning of freedom of association may be re-written. By being partner to this court proceeding, CLAC can have its full input.

The Ontario Public Service Employees Union sees the matter more broadly. They hope that not only freedom of association, but also the right to strike in essential services may be at stake. So they are going to join in the court case as well. In fact, they see it as a major vehicle whereby the union movement can challenge any government, if it seeks to impose restrictions on the rights of workers.

The stage is set. Over the next two months the twenty lawyers for CLAC, OPSEU, the Ontario government and several other groups will be marshalling their arguments for the great courtroom debate in January.

Fred Heerema

The CLAC from its very beginning has had to find its way into the courts for its very existence since 1963. It fought for its existence on the freedom of association on the basis of religion.

This court case goes right back to the very reasons why CLAC exists. Fortunately, CLAC was involved in this case right from day one, says Heerema. It provides a rare opportunity for CLAC to shape future interpretations of freedom of association.

Think global — act local

Ben Vandezande

One of the main challenges we people in the christian community feel is getting our views of social and political life out into the community. The reformational tradition has a lot of insight to offer and yet, it is striking how silent we are in the public media, especially radio.

I realize that programs like the Back to God Hour are being aired across the country, but that's not what I'm talking about. I think it's time we considered locally produced christian comment on *social political* issues of the day.

There are two important differences: 1) the material involves local people and local issues; 2) the starting point for the topic is the issues that everyone has do deal with. Perhaps we could call it a parallel social-political ministry to the Back-to-God-Hour.

Our problem would not be finding material. There is so much in print these days that could serve as a starting point for a good editorial. Every week C.C. could provide enough material for a 5 minute program.

We would need to learn something about the difference between radio and magazines so that we use radio in the way it is most effective; ie. a one-on-one communication for short spans of time.

We would have to learn how to address issues in a lanaguage our neighbour could understand. But I think that is within our reach. It simply means we take nothing for granted in our explanation of our perspective on the news.

We would have to be willing to provide someone with a bit of pay to set it up and work it out each week. It's simply too much work to be done strictly by volunteers.

Start small, think big

The important thing is to start small. Go to the local station and find out about their policy on guest editorials and/or religious broadcasting. Tell them you have an existing idea you would like to share. Offer them a weekly 2 minute comment on the news of the day from a christian viewpoint. If they are open to the idea, be prepared to provide them with a couple of samples.

Before you proceed with a commitment be sure you draw together a group of fellow christians that will work with you and critique you in your work. Then think of catchy titles and pick the air time that you would prefer.

Start small, but think big. Three years ago I started at our local AM station with a 60 second editorial. That grew to 3 minutes, then 5, then 15, and this fall I have a half-hour weekly show and the station is paying for it!

May I suggest every community draw together a rep from the school, church, social action groups and approach their local station with a request. While we are developing a reformational christian view of society we must not forget to tell our neighbours about it!

Nick Loenen elected alderman in first bid

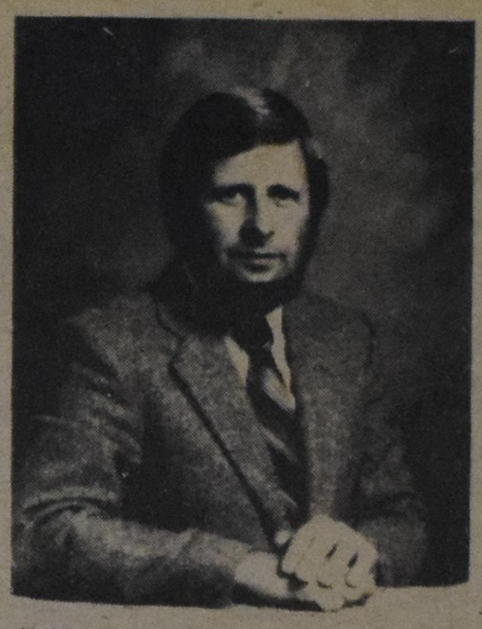
Bert Witvoet

RICHMOND, B.C. — Nick Loenen has been elected to City Council in the November 19 municipal election.

There were a total of 18 candidates running for 8 seats on Council. Seven incumbents were returned, but one was unseated by Loenen. Loenen came in sixth in the overall Richmond election, which is not based on the ward system.

The extremely low voter turn-out indicated that the voters were fairly satisfied with the status quo, according to Loenen. "There were no contentious issues."

The overall results showed general support for Premier Bennets austerity measures, Loenen felt. The NDP incumbent who lost out to Nick Loenen, Harold Steves, is a prominent NDP person. The other three NDP incumbents all slipped from a previously high standing to the lower end of the eight person roster.



Nick Loenen

Loenen contributes his successful first bid for Council to tremendous support from the Christian Reformed community, who saw in his candidacy an opportunity to have a member of their community represented at City Hall.

CRC Young People, Cadets and Calvinettes distributed 11,000 brochures in a matter of two hours.

But Loenen also received a great boost from Campaign Life and evangelical churches. His appearance on television in an all-candidates meeting, where he was thoroughly grilled on his anti-abortion stand, won him the support of many concerned Christians.

"It was prayer and hard work that explains my surprising victory," explains Loenen.

Nick does not want to see the abortion question as the single most influential factor in his campaign. "I did not mention abortion a whole lot," he said, "because I don't want to be a one-issue person. But it obviously contributed to my being elected."

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Principles no substitute for faith, professor explains

Paul De Groot

EDMONTON, Alta. — All of Canada's political parties can claim to have christian principles. But they don't advertise themselves as specifically christian, and their principles are distinctly different.

Those factors, outlined Nov. 9 by Dr. Paul Marshall, a professor at the Institute for Christian Studies, should give pause to those who believe a distinct political system can be derived from the Bible.

Marshall told the annual meeting of the Edmonton branch of Citizens for Public Justice that both left- and right-wing parties can claim christian principles.

Right wing parties emphasize the need to limit the power of government in a sinful world where power is frequently abused; the protection of individual freedom; and the responsibility of each individual to make choices, and pay the consequences of those choices. All of those ideas can be found in the Bible, Marshall said.

Also evident in the Bible, are the importance of caring for one's neighbour and looking beyond one's own interests; the unity of humanity; and need to seek justice for the poor. These principles are frequently important to left-wing parties. But people tend to be selective in the principles they apply. Socialists rarely stress limiting the power of government, and conservatives rarely denounce greed as an economic motive, Marshall noted.

This selective use of christian principles can turn into idolatry, he said. Biblical prophets were constantly warning people against idolatry of money, denouncing unwholy alliances with neighbouring countries, and damning dependence on chariots, viewed as an offensive weapon of war.

"You can get something in God's creation which in itself is good but which, when put in the place of God becomes idolatry," Marshall said. Principles can conflict, he added. A son asked by his father to build an altar to a pagan god faces the dilemna of whether he should honour the commandment to honour his parents, or the one forbidding idolatry.

"Christian politics is not, in the first place, the application of christian principles to politics," Marshall said.

Dr. Paul Marshall

"The christian faith is not in the first place a set of rules and laws. It is being taken hold of by the Spirit of God," and living a life which reflects that Spirit.

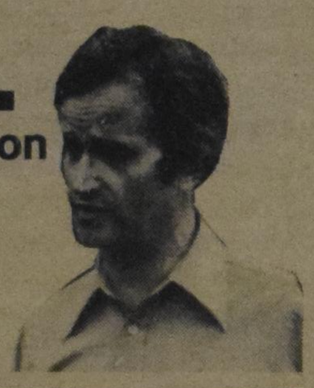
"Faith is always guided by principles, but principles are never a substitute for faith."

Christians should recognize that biblical principles will rarely give them final, unambiguous solutions to the problems of the modern world.

"An essential christian principle is human responsibility and freedom. We are called, and made able by God, to discern, to judge fairly, to see what principles apply and how."

Reagan can break the nuclear deadlock

Cross examination



Dr. Bernard Zylstra

"A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought."
President Ronald Reagan in his address to the United Nations in September.

The deployment of 572 Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe will begin in earnest before the end of this year.

The American and Russian negotiators have not been able to reach agreement after nearly a decade of talks — neither on the deployment of these European-based missiles nor on the deployment of new intercontinental strategic missiles which America and Russia have aimed at each other's cities.

Can the deadlock be broken?

Prime Minister Trudeau has initiated the most serious effort to date to break the deadlock, among all of the leaders in the NATO countries. He visited six European nations in the second week of November, and he hopes to visit Washington and Moscow soon, to get response to his plan. The first step in his plan calls for a meeting of the five nuclear powers — America, Russia, England, France, and China — as soon as possible in the new year. Though his efforts have rightly been applauded, the response to his proposals has been mixed.

I believe it is possible, even at this late date, to break the deadlock. How?

President Ronald Reagan can break the nuclear deadlock by announcing to the Kremlin that America will not produce or deploy any nuclear warhead between January 1 and July 1 of 1984. Such an announcement should be accompanied by the information that America would continue nuclear arms research and testing as normal. It should be accompanied by a specific invitation to Russia about detailed negotiations about every facet of the nuclear arms race between the two superpowers, climaxing in an invitation by Reagan to meet with Yuri Andropov, or his successor, during the last week of June. Finally, such an announcement should state that the production and deployment of nuclear warheads will be resumed in July as now planned for January if no progress is made in the negotiations during the half-year moratorium.

What are the merits of such a proposal?

1. President Reagan has consistently argued that the USA must bargain with Russia from a position of strength. He means by this *increased* strength — and that is the US contribution to the deadlock. Reagan will lose nothing in bargaining power if for the short period of six months the US would simply maintain its *present* nuclear strength.
2. Such a moratorium would in no way incite Russia to actually use its nuclear arms against western Europe or any other parts of the globe. There are good reasons for not having much trust in the Kremlin. But there is one area where we can depend on them: Russia's totalitarian rulers do not want to commit political suicide.
3. Reagan, precisely because he is a conservative Republican President, can get the public support for such an innovative move in the United States. A liberal Democrat would not be able to rally the population behind him. Such a move would be parallel to Richard Nixon's opening the doors to China twelve years ago.
4. For three years now Reagan has done little to cool the tensions between Washington and Moscow. Most likely he will run for a second term, and that means that during the last half of 1984 he will be busy getting re-elected. Any innovative move from his side will have to be made before that time. This would give him an opportunity to prove that he meant what he said to the UN: "A nuclear war cannot be won and must not be fought."
5. Since *America* is about to begin the deployment of new missiles in Europe — to be sure, with the consent of NATO governments, but with increasing unrest within its citizenries — *America* is in the best position to make an imaginative move that will in one fell swoop electrify the entire world behind a concrete step that might lead to *bilateral* denuclearization agreements in the near future.
6. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, such an American initiative would immediately place the moral burden for a positive response on Russia. Yuri Andropov, even more than Brezhnev, has been quite clever in manipulating world opinion against America — a task made easier by Reagan's militaristic alternative to careful diplomacy in easing world tensions. But Reagan's unilateral announcement of a six-month moratorium would change that overnight. If the Kremlin would not grasp Reagan's outstretched hand in an issue of such magnitude, the Russian leaders would lose whatever credibil·ty they have today, perhaps not at home but certainly abroad.

Ronald Reagan and Yuri Andropov are both old men. They have only a little time left to contribute to world peace. Andropov seems to be moving out of the picture already. But they, because of their positions at the head of the world's superpowers, have the authority to begin the elimination of the threat of a nuclear holocaust.

Dr. Bernard Zylstra is President of the Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto.

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Church

Pastoral Pondering

A successful church

Jack Vos

It's interesting to analyze churches. Christians keep on being busy with it, for reasons good and bad. Especially today, with the secular emphasis on success, dynamic and growing congregations draw much admiration. I don't appreciate this fad. But from experience I also know that from every 'successful' church there's something to be learned. I feel happiest about being able to learn from the Holy Spirit's description of a successful church. I'm talking about the church in Antioch.

Pioneer in World Relief

This congregation has fascinated me for a number of years now. There was nothing stuffy about it! It pioneered on more than one occasion. When a message was received about a great famine just ahead, the congregation took it to heart. They took from their resources according to their ability and sent help to the hungry brothers and sisters in Jerusalem. Barnabas and Paul, who delivered the congregation's gifts, were the first representatives of the Christian Church's international world relief committee. For this church, believing in Jesus was more than talk: it turned into compassion and action.

Pioneer in Multi-Racial Evangelism

The congregation showed its real mettle even more clearly in evangelism. Up to that time, Christians — all of Jewish origin — preached Jesus only to fellow Jews. But in Antioch some Jewish converts from Cyprus as well as the North African trading port of Cyrene joined the congregation. These converts might easily have been isolated because of the special work they wanted the church to do. They weren't. The congregation heard their challenge to bring the gospel to non-Jewish people.

Led by them the congregation broke through a centuries-long racial barrier and brought the gospel to Greek-speaking gentiles. And the Lord gave the blessing: "And a large company was added to the Lord" (Acts 11:19-26). What a daring move! And how the Lord gave encouragement!

Pioneer in World Missions

The church was given an even larger vision. That made it a good instrument for still more pioneering. From Acts 13:1 we learn something about its consistory. Far from a cozy in-group that liked to think conservative and small, it had leaders with contacts and varied backgrounds. It included a Romanized Jew who thought of himself as a citizen; possibly, a successful former businessman from Cyrene; and a civil servant from the court of one of the Herods. Another member was Barnabas, "a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith" (Acts 11:24). And then there was Paul, university graduate, top honours student in Gamaliel's seminary in Jerusalem, and now a convert to Jesus Christ. These leaders were open to the Word of God and the working of the Holy Spirit. They had a Spirit-inspired dream of a universal church with congregations spreading all over the world. That consistory and that congregation received the Spirit's message to send out Barnabas and Paul as the Christian Church's first world missionaries!

You can see why this church attracts my attention. I want to learn from this Biblical description. I want to learn about its faith and compassion, its break through and its world-wide vision. I want to be refreshed by the secrets that made this church successful. For I am part of Christ's church today and have to give leadership in a congregation.

As I study the Antioch church something unexpected has caught my attention. This pioneering church held *fasts!*

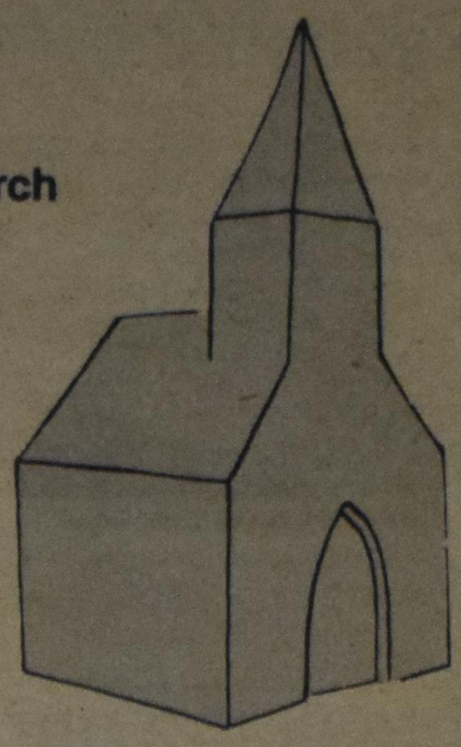
I wonder why? Don't you?

Rev. Jack Vos is Pastor of the Covenant Chr. Ref. Church in St. Catharines.

Press Parade

The building of a church

When Jesus said: "on this rock I will build my church," he wasn't talking about a highly structured and well-n..naged organization either. Not that beautiful buildings are bad, nor that structure and administration are bad, far from it. But a fine building and active committees and good administration doesn't necessarily add up to a church yet. A church is a community of believers in Jesus Christ. You have a church when you have people who find their pleasure in following Jesus Christ — who make the cause of Jesus theirs, who consider it a privilege to invest their time and resources in his work, who never stop looking for the new age when all things shall be wholly subject to the one true God. How much of a church are we? Our building or



our numbers or the size of our budget doesn't make us a good church. We're only a good church if we concentrate our efforts on serving God's cause on earth and bringing glory to His name. Whatever way we can do that best is the way that we should promote as we seek to be partners with Christ in building his Church.

A.V. Geest

The family visit

About this time of the year your District Elder will begin calling for family visits. While reporting on such visits at Elders meetings, a familiar complaint is that the conversation was difficult. Exactly what does an elder want to hear at such a visit? Probably he will ask about your devotion practices. Do you read the bible and pray at meals? Do you study the bible and have time for personal prayer? He might ask questions about your relationship to the church. Do you go to church twice on Sunday? Would you be willing to contribute by serving on a committee or teach Sunday School etc.? Do you feel strengthened by partaking of the Lord's Supper? What an elder really wants to hear from you without asking the question so that you can only answer with a yes or no is that you love the Lord, that you find your strength in Him, that you desire to serve Him and you are not ashamed to confess Him in your place where you work. If that is not your testimony then what is it?

The family visit can be a rewarding experience for elder and family alike if you are willing to share your experiences, joys and sorrows. Ask him to pray for specific needs in your life, and let him lead you and instruct you to a life of closer communion with your Heavenly Father.

Bulletin,
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CR SEE

The Johnsons

Our guests the Johnsons came
to church
to seek with us the fellowship
of God.
Alas, they soon gave up
their search
when left ignored on our
parking lot.

Klaas Sis

Church News

Christian Reformed

Address change

Immanual Chr. Ref. Church of Hamilton, Ont. announces its new clerk, Mr. Harry Meyer and new secretary of deacons, Mr. Paul Spoelstra. Send all correspondence care of the church, P.O. Box 6307, Station F, Hamilton, Ont.

Trinity Chr. Ref. Church of Goderich, Ont. announces its new secretary of deacons, Mr. John Hessels, R.R. 2, Goderich, ON N7H 3X8; (519) 524-6917.

Ab Vos (and other volunteers) sells and sews in the sun

Self help for the disadvantaged

Thousands of miles separate the old man working on his craft and the shelves of the store room in Covenant Christian Reformed Church, St. Catharines, Ontario. Yet that tie is so real.

Olive wood carvings from the middle east to brass candlesticks from India find their way to this crafts centre. It is the Self-Help program sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee.

A group of women from the St. Catharines area first got together in 1980 to sell the crafts but also to sew quilts, aprons, pillows. etc. Even though the "store" is open every Tuesday morning, the best sales come at school bazaars and congregational meetings.

The crafts come not only from the far away corners of the world but also from men and women in Canadian prisons and from the nation's native people.

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Jacob Kuntz

Sunday observance

In several parts of Canada the pros and cons of "Sunday closing" are debated again. Some businessmen are pushing for more freedom to open their stores on Sunday. All Christians in Canada must form a common front to guard that one, God-given day of rest against the onslaught of the secular, materialistic spirit of our times.

It was good to read the following editorial in the "Catholic New Times" of October 30, 1983:

The city of Toronto, like some other cities in this country, is presently engaged in a heated debate over the virtues and vices of Sunday closing.

Arguments in favour of business on Sunday emphasize the convenience and additional enjoyment which would seem to follow upon such a decision. Such gain seems to us as loss.

It is our opinion, that the move to open stores on Sunday closes off the deeply human and spiritual need which has long found its western cultural expression through the observance of the Sabbath.

In a culture dominated by an economic view of time (time as money, time well-spent, time wasted), it becomes ever more urgent to reaffirm a personal sense of time in which time becomes as precious as family and friends. When everything and everyone is measured in terms of usefulness and productivity, the safeguarding of useless and non-productive time becomes an act of political and religious resistance.

Because we live in an age which has so little time for the eternal, the observance of the Sabbath becomes our humble acknowledgement that the eternal always has time for us ....

Peace Prize

Most people in the West were pleasantly surprised when they heard that Poland's Lech Walesa had won the Nobel Peace Prize. Not so the editor of the (Anglican) Canadian Churchman. In the issue of November '83 the decision to give the honour to Walesa is criticized. We read:

It would be interesting to know the criteria used in naming Lech Welesa as this year's Nobel Peace Prize winner.

He certainly does not fall into the same class as previous winners, such as Lester B. Pearson, Menachem Begin, Willy Brandt and Anwar Sadat. He has not settled an international dispute, or signed an international peace treaty, or taken on the role of peace-maker between warring factions.

Dr. Alfred Nibel intended his bequest to honour the person of society that rendered the greatest service to the cause of international brotherhood, in the suppression or reduction of standing armies, or in the establishment or furtherance of peace congresses.

Walesa has done none of these things. In fact, it could be argued that he has brought Poland into a state of civil unrest which at times has bordered on revolution.

This is not to say he has made no contribution to the welfare of his countrymen. He has awakened them to the possibility of change, and led them in attempting to bring about that change ....

But he is no peace-maker,

The Nobel Committee should have gone back to the drawing board and found a more worthy recipient or — as they have done with great effect in the past — declared no winner at all.

The place of the pastor

"Should the Picture of the Pastor Change?" was the title of an interesting address held by the Rev. G. Vandooren at the Convocation of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches. The entire speech, dealing with the place of the pastor in today's society and some modern views on it, was printed in the Oct. 7 issue of *Clarion*. The address was concluded as follows:

And yet, being a pastor is a full-time business. He does not need to work seven days and seven nights, but he is on call for all of them. The biblical picture of the pastor does not allow him to take off his so-called "office" as his predecessor took off his long black coat.

Any pastor had better find his example in Paul, who worked day and night, who never stopped praying and worrying for the churches, who carried them on his heart, and presented this as a model to the elders of Ephesus, Acts 20.

Any pastor had better find his example in the Good Shepherd of John 10, who "lays down his life for the sheep." These words do not necessarily only mean: to die for the sheep (although a pastor should be willing and ready even for that, when the need arises), but it also means: to put your life between the flock on the one side and the robbers and lions on the other side.

Chain letter

There are apparently chainletters for all kinds of good causes. The following advice regarding chainletters was found in an Anglican parish magazine and reprinted in the United Church Observer. (For practical purposes we have changed the word "vicar" to "pastor" and "Churchwardens" to "consistory").

If you are unhappy with your pastor, simply have your consistory send a copy of this letter to six other churches who are tired of their pastor and send him to the church at the top of the list in the letter. Within a week you will receive 16,435 pastors and one of them should be all right. Have faith in this chainletter and do not break the chain. One church did and got their old pastor back!

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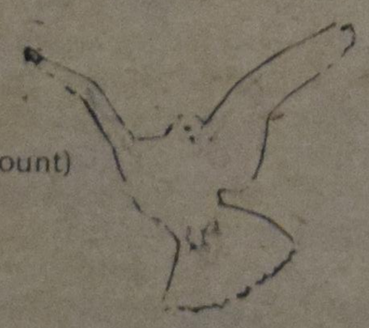

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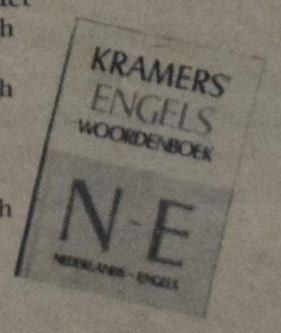

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School

Chalkmarks

Talking about original notes

Dear Mr. Editor

A while ago your paper suggested that parents send in more "original notes" when "Johnny" is absent or is asked to be absent. What do you think of this one?

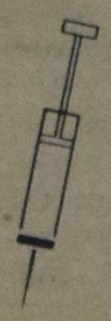
P. VanHuizen, principal,
Quinte Christian High School

From the sick chamber

Dear Mr. Principal
Thursday night a virus bit me,
Touched the lining of lungs and heart.
I shook with fever, writhed in agony;
My breathing was harsh, as if somebody smart
had pulled the wrong lever
And set the gears of my machinery
Grinding, scraping, worse than in our old jalopy.

I worried greatly and the next morn.
Didn't dare let all my menfolk be gone.
So Anthony was chosen to look after mom,
Until our family doctor got up and could come.
And that's why Anthony missed school that morn.

My problem was (and is) Pleurisy.
A condition cured only with rest.
So now I'm bored silly,
And do my very, very best,
To fill my days of enforced rest,
By writing silly, silly poetry.



Two more verses need to be added,
Because this coming Saturday
Our darling daughter, Laura,
Will sign her independence away,
By getting married in Toronto —
So we leave right after lunch — pronto!

And since my doctor warned me
That, if I didn't take my rest,
I wouldn't make it through the wedding.
So I think it's for the best,
That Anthony stays home another Friday,
To help me clean the house, and get away ...
Unless he has a special test that morn.
If **that's** the case, I'll send him on
And pick him up at noon.

Respectfully,

Anthony's mom

Sarnia's expansion "a miracle"

The newly expanded-renovated Sarnia Christian School did more than provide much needed space to an old facility. According to principal Leo Smit, the $750,000 project which involved the entire community, spawned fresh excitement in a community that had become rather complacent.

"The whole thing is a miracle," he enthused. "We started in mid-March and finished in October."

Four new classrooms were added to the original ten-classroom building. Two of the oldest rooms were demolished to make way for a new gym. The gymnasium has allowed for expansion of the physical education programme which was previously taught in a neighbouring church gym.

According to Mr. Smit, what had formerly been a "dumpy" looking builing is now a spacious, modern facility with attractive landscaping.

On November 12 the school had its grand opening. Five hundred people, including many dignitaries were present. Bud Cullen, MP and Andry Brandt, MPP represented both levels of government.

An initial factor in the fund-raising which proved to be the key to the feasibility of the project was the federal/provincial Coed Work Programme. "When the planning committee discovered they could get a grant of $125,000 to pay building wages, they realized a new building might become a reality," said Mr. Smit.

Enthusiastically breaking ground for the expansion and renovation of Sarnia Christian School were (from left) Laurens Kaldeway, charter school board member, Sarnia MP Bud Cullen, six-year old student Michael Wildschut, Len Joosse board chairman, Sarnia mayor Marceil Saddy and Sarnia Township Reeve Ray Whitnall.

Another $60,000 grant was made available to them from the federal government.

The largest sum by far was raised by the community. $235,000 was collected over a period of weeks. The goal had been $150,000. "It was beyond belief, totally unexpected," said the school secretary, Ann Veenkamp.

In addition, an anonymous donor donated $1.25 for each dollar raised to a maximum of $180,000. Altogether a sum of $600,000 was raised. A $150,000 mortgage remains on the building.

Sarnia Christian School has an enrollment of 256 students. Its tuition rate is $2,700 per family. It was a pattern of a ten percent increase in enrollment over the last two years that prompted the expansion.

A direct result of the new building has been the escalating number of inquiries into the school. "Our profile in the community has risen considerably," said Mr. Smit. The school requires that parents subscribe to an educational creed that defines the principles of christian education.

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Can U.S. guns stop communist religion?

Jim Van Oosterom

You can't fight ideas with guns. It's not a novel idea, nor one most reasonable people would challenge. That is, if they stopped to think about it.

Church history, a subject close to our hearts, is full of examples of the above truism. The Roman Catholic Church, for instance, had no chance of stopping the Reformation. Despite, and perhaps because of, cruelties perpetrated by Charles V and Philip II on behalf of the Roman Church, the Reformation thrived. You can't fight ideas with guns. Only with ideas.

The military factor in foreign policy

Still, American foreign policy seems unpersuaded. With unimaginative and distressing regularity, it tries to counter the ideology of communism with guns and more guns, either directly or through a client dictator. And in the process it supports the only faction of the human race that does believe that you can fight ideas with guns: the military.

This is, of course, true on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Both military institutions are undeterred by those who argue that you can't fight ideas with guns. And starting with a typical general's belief that politicians are here today and gone tomorrow, the military, which holds its right to possess arms forever as a sacred trust, becomes the "other factor" in any foreign policy, a factor which, militarists believe, ensures continuity against the forces of change.

Soviet Bonapartism

Since the birth of the Russian Revolution, Soviet politicians have dreaded what they call "Bonapartism," the real threat caused by the Red Army to the sovereignty of the Communist Party. And well they might!

Was Lenin not always suspicious of the Red Army, to the extent that he attached political commissars to army units to guarantee party supremacy?

And did Stalin not decimate the army officer corps in the notorious purges of the thirties?

Was Khruschev not forced to humble the great Zhukov for his threatened coup? Was not Khruschev's adventurism in the Cuban missile crisis sparked in part by his attempt to mollify the military for his dismissal of Zhukov? And was not Brezhnev compelled by the Red Army to endorse the invasion of Afghanistan, over the objections of the KGB?

Finally, to what extent the Red Army intended to torpedo Andropov's peace overtures to the West by shooting down the Korean airliner has also been a matter of some speculation.

American Bonapartism

American foreign policy, perhaps no less than Russia's, is also profoundly influenced by the presence of the military. Who was it that first warned Americans about the growing military-industrial complex?

None other than former president Eisenhower, himself an ex-general, sensitive to the interests of the military establishment whose senior ranks count many aspiring to spend their retirement days as senior managers or board members of some defence related industrial giant.

Moreover, was it not another general, the celebrated MacArthur this time, who, during the Korean War, threatened to cross the Yalu River into China despite White House orders to the contrary? And what about the other famous soldier, General Patton, who wanted to roll his tank divisions, not to Berlin, but to Moscow? Finally, what about the military misinformation sent by general Westmoreland to the State Department during the Vietnam War?

The ledger, it would seem, is about even. Enough at least to call it so. Bonapartism was not merely a French disease. Roman emperors also dreaded it, though they must have called it by another name.

Limited conflict zones

Reagan, unquestionably, has the military's blessing. Not only has he given the armed forces a new lease on life by pushing for European missile deployment and the MX programme which the airforce needs for its "limited nuclear war" policy, but, like Brezhnev and Andropov, he is willing — though perhaps not consciously — to provide staging areas and limited conflict zones where the armed forces can test their weapons and polish their brass. Vietnam, Afghanistan and El Salvador are some. But potentially there are many more, nearly all in the Third World.

Disturbing, isn't it? The only consolation for North Americans is that these conflict zones are usually far enough away from home — for now. Which leads most military analysts to predict that, should a major war ever erupt, it will begin in an area that is most sensitive to the major interests of both big powers and where the superpowers can no longer control their client states. Certainly not Grenada. But how about the Middle East?

Soviet strategy

So how do crises in these conflict areas come about? Afghanistan aside, most are a direct result of Soviet subversion. Its message to people chafing under fascist military regimes is clear and beguilingly simple: embrace the proletarian revolution.

To help them, Soviet agents or, more recently, Soviet client states like Cuba, foment trouble and destabilize the internal affairs of these military regimes. They send advisers armed with Soviet weapons to the insurgents and instruct them in the technique of guerilla warfare. It is unimportant whether these insurgents are communists, nationalists, pimps, prostitutes or disaffected liberals: the purpose is mainly to force the U.S. to respond.

The Soviets know how the U.S. will respond. Not since a brief interlude under Kennedy, who favoured the Peace Corps over the Marine Corps, have American presidents replied in any other way than a show of force. The Soviets know that, as in Vietnam, the U.S. must eventually lose. Even when it wins, it loses.

Why? The Soviet formula, though complex in execution, is really simple: provide insurgents with just enough guns and propaganda to subvert the internal order and promise them the butter later. "Later" would be after the U.S. had rushed in its troops to put down the revolt and had established a military junta or dictatorship, after which the good people of the world would vilify the American imperialists and force their withdrawal, bringing the collapse of the military puppets. Thus pathetically, U.S. foreign policy becomes an instrument of Soviet subversion. It worked in China, Cuba and Vietnam. Why shouldn't it also work in Angola, Somaliland, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and elsewhere?

Socialism in one country

Do Russians really want to promote world revolution? Yes and no.

World revolution is, of course, official Marxist-Leninist doctrine. Both Lenin and

Continued on page 17 ...

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Not just anyone can serve on campus committees

Jan de Koning

The Campus committees of Ontario, together with the campus ministers, have been meeting once a year for the last few years, in order to explore common problems, to give each other mutual support and to discuss better ways of doing the work that needs to be done. We held the meeting this year in Willowdale on October 15. Next year the meeting is planned for October 20.

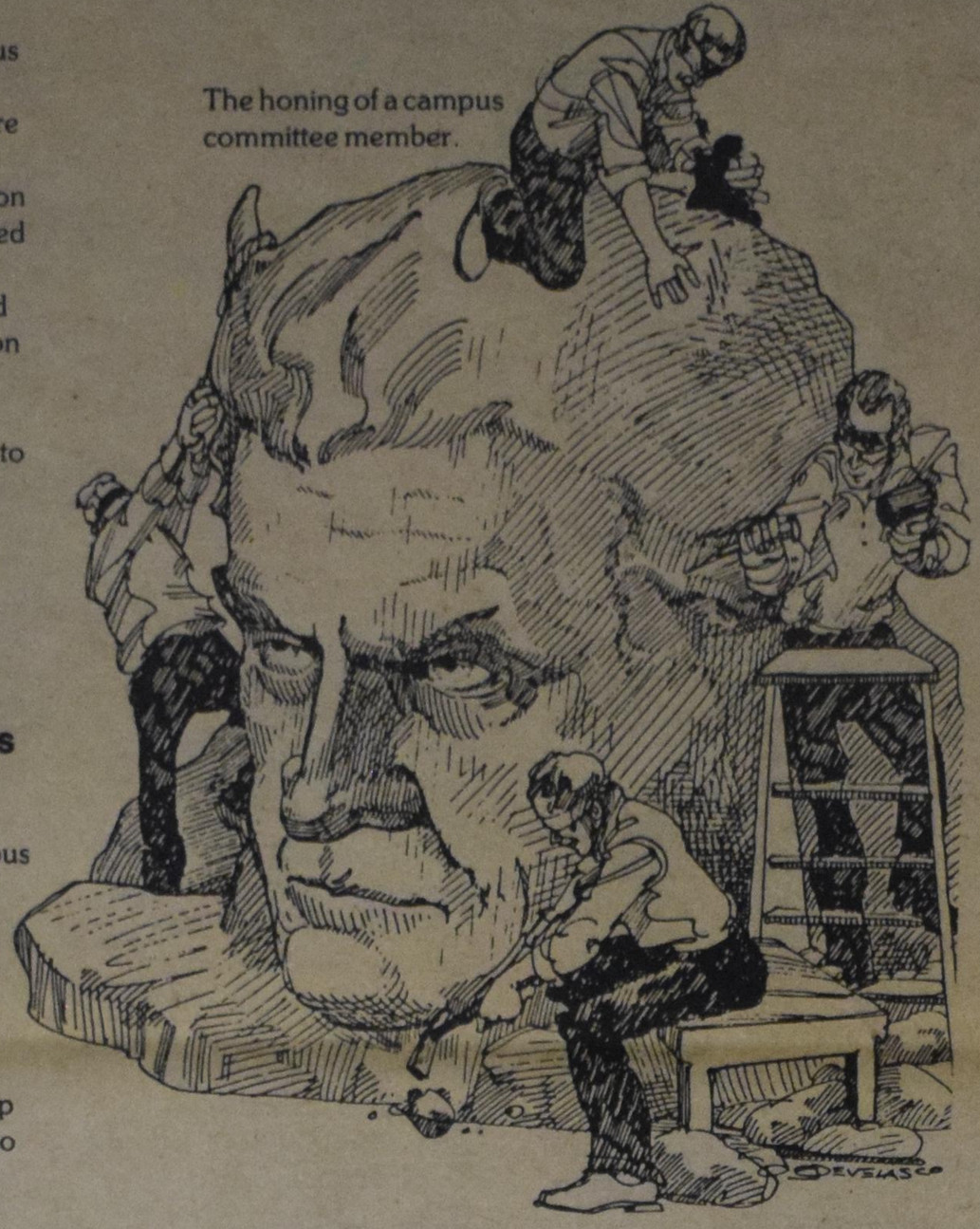
What is the work of a campus minister? The fact that the salaries of campus ministers are paid by the Board of Home missions is already an indication that the major task is considered to be outreach.

It is, however, a special kind of outreach. It is an outreach on campusses of secular universities and colleges. A campus minister must be able to speak at the level of students and professors; to show, for example, how the kingship of Christ applies to the study of medicine, engineering or physics.

Contact with students

Since many students of reformed persuasion attend secular universities, our campus ministers try to contact them and try to organize groups, where subjects relevant to university studies will be discussed. These groups, though focussed in the first place on students who grew up in reformed circles, are open to all. It is hoped that our "own" students will bring in students from other backgrounds. It makes discussions more lively and it shows the campus pastor where to concentrate his efforts. An important (side-) aspect is, that our own students, in helping and bringing in others, are thereby strengthened in their own faith.

A third area in which our campus ministers are active is giving pastoral care to people who drop in at their offices. To our surprise we have found that the majority of people asking for pastoral care are not reformed.



The honing of a campus committee member.

Qualifications for campus committees

What is the task of the campus committees in all of this? It is often said that the campus committee has to act as a kind of consistory supervising the minister. To do that properly a campus committee member must have a feeling for what is going on on our secular campusses. When members of such committees are to be appointed, those appointing should keep that in mind. Even the best of our ministers like to be assisted by a well qualified body of helpers or supervisors.

We felt at our October 15 meeting that the best qualifications for campus committee members is to have a sense of what is going on at a university (or college). Preferably, they have to understand some of the workings of the bureaucracies of these institutions as well. Above all, they must have a good understanding of young students, of their joys, and frustrations.

These qualifications point to people who spend much of their time at universities: faculty members, students (graduate as well as under-graduate); but also, and maybe even more, to understanding mothers (and fathers) of students. Mothers, who have close contact with their children, can be of enormous help. I hardly need mention here one qualification, which I took for granted; namely, that anybody appointed to this work must be a fully convinced Christian, committed to witnessing for Christ in all areas of life. Such well qualified members maybe of enormous assistance to our pastors.

Non-qualifications

Negatively, I have to add, that I don't think it is a good idea to appoint brother So and So, or Rev. Such and Such, simply because they attended a college or university some ten or twenty years ago; or to appoint them because they happen to be a consistory member. Universities and especially the students have changed.

Maybe I should add, older people have changed: they are not young anymore, and unless some special effort was made to stay in contact with young people at universities, they have lost touch with what is going on at a university. Colleges and universities differ too. Somebody who studied at The King's College, Edmonton, is probably a poor judge of what is going on at McMaster University, Hamilton, this year. So not only age and time, but place as well is an important consideration.

Additional criteria

Furthermore, there must be a willingness and an ability to get involved. That does not mean that each campus committee member has to lead a Bible study group (though, that, too, is possible), or has to open his or her home to students (though, that, too, may be a great help). It does mean, however, that there must be a willingness and possibility to attend meetings and to be available when the phone rings. To be available for advice and maybe suggestions.

Even more, a campus committee member should not hesitate to phone the campus minister and make suggestions on his/her own, without being asked for them. (Someone who would misuse this right by making hourly suggestions, be they ever so good, is not wanted. A campus minister, who needs that much advice is not a good campus minister. Or, the committee member does not know how to organize his/her thoughts and time, and is for that reason not a good committee member).

Do I need to say more? We would like to see mothers and fathers of our students involved, especially those who have an open eye for the necessity that the Church of Jesus Christ must be a witnessing Church.

Also, we would like to see some of our mature students involved in the committee work. And we need faculty, more faculty. It will help the work of our campus ministers, who often work on lonely posts in the midst of citadels where science is religion.

It is not good that they are alone. They need to know and experience that others are with them.

Jan de Koning is a member of the Toronto Campus Committee and an instructor of Mathematics at the University of Toronto.

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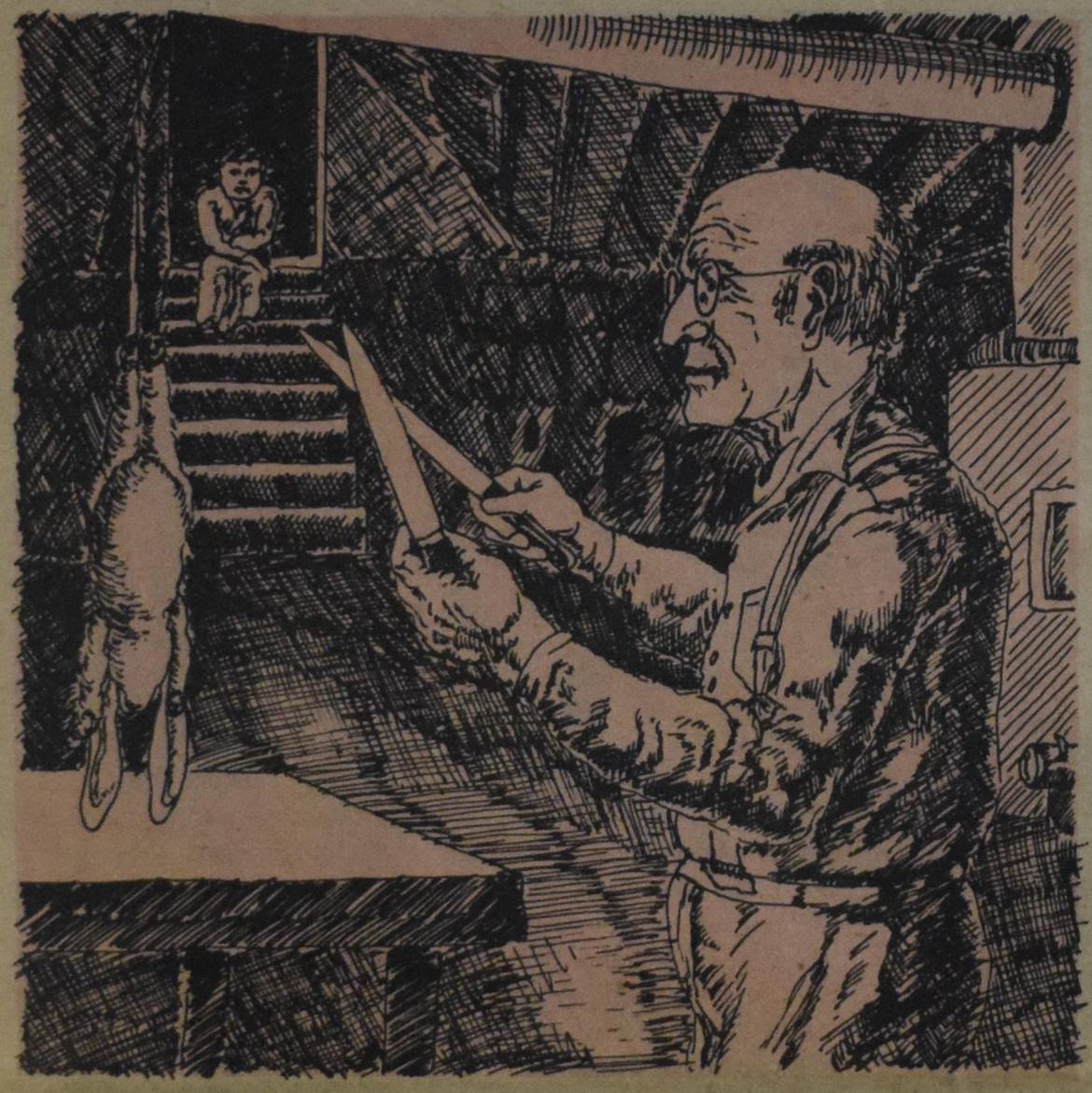
CHRISTMAS STORY

The white rabbit

Hugh Cook

A story for older children and adults



The boy knew that his father must have looked funny to the young married men working at the factory. Every day after finishing his paper route the boy would stop his bike at the plant and wait for his father. At 5:30 the whistle on the roof blew with a shrill blast of steam, and a split second later the young men burst from the building, full of banter, combing their hair and lighting cigarettes, silver lunch pails squeezed between elbow and waist. Then they drove off in shiny cars.

Ten minutes later his father appeared, alone, wearing his black beret and a gray striped suit too baggy for church but still too useful during the week for it to be thrown away. Then he mounted his black Dutch bicycle with the black plastic mud flaps encasing the chain and the top half of the rear wheel, and he pedalled the four miles home with the boy.

"How was it today;" the boys grandfather asked when they got home.

"The same," his father replied. "All we did today was print milk cartons, ten hours of it. Tomorrow we do frozen fish cartons."

"Here you are the best butcher in the country, and all you do is print little paper boxes," his grandfather snorted. "High time it is you left that place, Jaap."

"Ja, I know, but we can't yet."

The boy sensed his grandfather's impatience. Each day that dragged by without bringing to reality Opa's dream of a butcher shop in Canada only increased his misery, and he would sidle aimlessly through the house, muttering pronouncements at anyone or anything he thought needed them.

"Nieko, tie your shoelace! Next thing you know you will your neck break, and then see what kind of a medical bill we would have. Unless the government pays for that too already!"

"Joop, if you are downstairs going anyway, take an empty pail along and fill it with coal when you come back up. That's the trouble nowaways — nobody uses their heads anymore!"

He would sit in his living room chair, listening to phonographs of Psalms sung by a choir of Dutch fishermen. Or he would prop his high black shoes up on a hassock, his chin tilted sharply so that he could read through the bottom part of his bifocals. He spent hours reading the newspapers from Holland, but they only put him in a bad mood, for he saw little happening there of which he approved.

"Hhmmph!" he grunted. "Look at here. *Verdraait*, if the country isn't turning socialist. Those Nazis were one thing, but it's a good thing we left when we did, Jaap," he said to the boy's father. "Three civil servants for every decent working man. And for everything you need their permission. 'You want to build on your house an addition? Fill out an application. Paint your house yellow? Fill out a form. Remodel your bathroom? Come to our office. Next thing you know we would need their permission to paint the toilet seat! And if they didn't like the colour of my urine after I eat beets, a *stommeling* of a civil servant we would have knocking on our door!"

"That's better than to do it by the tree in the back yard like you do now," the boy's mother said.

"Ach woman, what do you know about these things!" he flamed. "Stick to your cooking and your sewing and your silly perfumes!"

The boy noticed his father trying to keep Opa busy by giving him little jobs to do around the house, like painting a room or building a closet, but these chores were not his trade. His hands were clumsy with a brush or a hammer. A knife was another thing. A knife was an extension of his right hand, as if he had been born with one there.

One day the boy's father came home triumphantly with a white rabbit dangling from his outstretched hand. "Got it cheap from Reitsma," he said, and handed it to Opa. When the boy saw his grandfather head for the basement with the dead rabbit he knew something was about to happen. He followed stealthily and hid in the darkness at the top of the stairs.

He saw Opa string up the rabbit by the hind legs, then take two knives and sharpen them by honing them on each other rapidly, the blades flashing in miniature duel. Opa took one of the knives and made a slit through the fur at each heel, just below the noose. Then he stripped the white pelt off the rabbit just as a person strips off soiled garments, and the sound was like the ripping of cloth.

When Opa was done the boy was shocked by the nakedness of the glossy red body dangling from the ceiling. Stripped of its coat it looked so small that the white fure still on its feet resembled baby bootees, but now grotesquely huge. The boy knew then that he could not eat of the rabbit.

His mother served it next day, with red wine to celebrate the event. She seemed surprised when he mumbled his no thanks.

"But Joop, it's good meat."

Opa did not let him off that easily. "Wait a minute, young man," he said in Dutch. "What do you mean you don't like it. Not good enough it is for you? Do you realize what people would have given for this during the War? Men had their throats slit for less, do you know that?" and he rasped his thumb across his adam's apple. His white hair bristled, his face was red with blood, and the loose flesh beneath his chin shook like the wattles of an old rooster.

At the end of the meal, as the boy's father was about to read the Bible passage, Opa took the Bible from his hand and turned to a different page. Then he looked around the table, and when he was satisfied that all were properly reverent he began to read, and the boy felt the cadence of the phrases as they seemed to rain down in blows upon his head: "O give thanks to the Lord for he is good ... let the redeemed of the Lord say so ... he gathered them out of lands ... they wandered in the wilderness ... and he delivered them ... he led them by a straight way ... let them thank the Lord ... for he satisfies him who is thirsty, and the hungry he fills with good things."

Later in the evening when his father went to the basement the boy followed and asked him why Opa was always so grouchy. "Things are a bit difficult for Opa right now," his father said, putting his arm around the boy's shoulder. "It's not easy for you to understand, I know, but Opa needs to have something to do, and maybe he felt insulted when you refused to eat the rabbit."

"I didn't mean it that way," the boy said. "Besides, he's grouchy all the time. And he's always talking about the War. Why does he have to talk about the War all the time?

Then his father told him of what had happened to Opa during the War.

He needed to think about that, and he went upstairs. He lay on his bed and thought about what his father had just told him, about the bomb that had struck Opa's house during the War. It had come with a high whistle, and then smashed the house to burning rubble. After the explosion Opa regained consciousness and began to search frantically in the burning ruin for his wife and relatives. He found his wife buried to her shoulders under brick and rock. Minutes later she had died. Then the fire forced Opa out of the ruin, and he could only stand by helplessly. After the blaze had died down, townspeople went in to search for the victims. In one blow the boy's grandmother, three uncles, and three aunts had been killed.

He lay on his back, thinking, and a memory came. He must have been about two. He was playing with wooden blocks on the living room floor when all at once he heard the staccato beat of marching boots on the cobblestones outside, and when he ran to the window and pushed aside the white gauze curtains he saw the soldiers, the German soldiers in the street below, coming right toward him. He peered from just above the window sill, watching the soldiers march closer and closer until they were right below him in the street, the faces hard beneath the rakish helmets, the precise rows of rifles with bayonets pointing upwards, the boots pounding on the cobblestones, the thunderous clack clack clack ricocheting between the high brick buildings in the narrow street, then echoing in his ears like a snare drum, and he dropped beneath the window sill in fright and closed his eyes tight and clamped his hands over his ears, but still he heard the boots, as if he were in a bad dream with a train hurtling toward him without his being able to move, the train shrieking by at the last minute, the vibration pounding through his whole body, until the metal rhythm had receded. Finally he rose. The soldiers were gone.

He brooded over these things and felt again his fear of that time, so that he felt suddenly cold. And then he thought he began to understand a little bit better why Opa was the way he was. But with the understanding came revulsion, for his grandfather's world seemed at that moment to be made of blood.

Continued on page 14 ...

CHRISTMAS STORY

Baboushka

A story for young children
Arthur Scholey

All the villagers were out, bubbling with excitement.

"Did you see it again last night?'

'Of course we did.'

'Much bigger.'

'It was moving, coming towards us. Tonight it will be high above us.'

That night, excitement, like a wind, scurried through the lanes and alleys.

'There's been a message.'

'An army is on the way.'

'Not an army — a procession.'

'Horses and camels and treasure.'

Now everyone was itching for news. No one could work. No one could stay indoors.

No one that is, but Baboushka. Baboushka had work to do — she always had. She swept, polished, scoured and shined. Her house was the best kept, best polished, best washed and painted. Her garden was beautiful, her cooking superb.

'All this fuss for a star!' she muttered. 'I haven't time even to look. I'm so behind, I must work all night!'

So, she missed the star at its most dazzling, high overhead. She missed the line of twinkling lights coming towards the village at dawn. She missed the sound of pipes and drums, the tinkling of bells getting louder. She missed the voices and whispers and then the sudden quiet of the villagers, and the footsteps coming up the path to her door. But the knocking! She couldn't miss that.

'Now what?' she demanded, opening the door.

Baboushka gaped in astonishment. There were three kings at her door! And a servant.

'My masters seek a place to rest,' he said.

'Yours is the best house in the village.'

'You ... want to stay here?'

'It would only be till night falls and the star appears again.'

Baboushka gulped. 'Come in, then,' she said.

How the king's eyes sparkled at the sight of the home-baked bread, the meat pies, the cakes, jams and pickles.

As she dashed out, serving them, Baboushka asked question after question.

'Have you come a long way?'

'Very far,' signed Gaspar.

'And where are you going?'

'We're following the star,' said Melchior.

'But where?'

They didn't know, they told her. But they believed that it would lead them, in the end, to a new-born king, a king such as the world had never seen before, a king of Earth and Heaven.

'Why don't you come with us?' said Balthasar. 'Bring him a gift as we do. See, I bring gold, and my colleagues bring spices and ointments.

'Oh,' said Baboushka, 'I am not sure that he would welcome me. And as for a gift ...'

'This excellent pickle's fit for any king!' cried Balthasar.

Baboushka laughed. 'Pickle? For a baby? A baby needs toys.' She paused. 'I have a cupboard full of toys,' she said sadly. 'My baby son, my little king, died while very small.'

Balthasar stopped her as she bustled once more to the kitchen.

'This new king could be your king, too. Come with us when the star appears tonight,' he said.

'I'll ... I'll think about it,' sighed Baboushka.

As the kings slept, Baboushka cleaned and tidied as quietly as she could. What a lot of extra work there was! And this new king. What a funny idea — to go off with the kings to find him. Yet, could she possibly do it, leave home and go looking for him just like that?

Baboushka shook herself. No time for dreaming! All this washing-up, and putting away of dishes, and extra cooking. Anyway, how long would she be away? What would she wear? And what about gifts?

She sighed. 'There is so much to do. The house will have to be cleaned when they've gone. I couldn't just leave it.'

A TRADITIONAL RUSSIAN FOLK TALE

It was evening when Baboushka wearily arrived at Bethlehem. How many days had she been on the journey? She could not remember. And could this really be the place for a royal baby? It didn't look like it. It was not much bigger than her own village. She went to the inn.

'Oh yes,' said the landlord, 'the kings were here, two days ago. There was great excitement. But they didn't even stay the night.'

'And a baby?' Baboushka cried. 'Was there a baby?'

'Yes,' said the landlord, 'there was. Those kings asked to see the baby, too.'

When he saw the disappointment in Baboushka's eyes, he stopped.

'If you'd like to see where the baby was,' he said quickly, 'it was across the yard there. I couldn't offer the poor couple anything better at the time. My inn was packed full. They had to go in the stable.'

Baboushka followed him across the yard.

'Here's the stable,' he said. Then he left her.

'Baboushka?'

Someone was standing in the half-light of the doorway. He looked kindly at her. Perhaps he knew where the family had gone? She knew now that the baby king was the most important thing in the world to her.

'They have gone to Egypt, and safety,' he told Baboushka. 'And the kings have returned to their kingdoms another way. But one of them told me about you. I am sorry but, as you see, you are too late. The kings came as soon as they saw the star. It was Jesus the Christ-child they found, the world's Saviour.'

It is said that Baboushka is still looking for the Christ-child, for time means nothing in the search for things that are real. Year after year she goes from house to house calling, 'Is he here? Is the Christ-child here?'

Particularly at Christmas, when she sees a sleeping child and hears of good deeds, she will lift out a toy from her basket and leave it, just in case.

Then, on she goes with her journey, still searching, still calling, 'Is he here? Is the Christ-child here?'

Suddenly it was night-time again. There was the star!

'Are you ready, Baboushka?'

'I'll ... I'll come tomorrow,' Baboushka called. 'I'll catch up. I must just tidy here, find a gift, get ready ...'

The kings waved sadly. The star shone ahead. Baboushka ran back into the house, eager to get on with her work.

Sweeping, dusting, beating all the cushions and carpets, cleaning out the kitchen, cooking — away went the night.

At last she went to the small cupboard, opened the door and gazed sadly once again at all those toys. But, goodness me, how dusty they were! One thing was certain. They weren't fit for a baby king. They would all need to be cleaned. Better get started at once.

On, on, she worked. One by one the toys glowed, glistened and gleamed. There! Now they would be fit for the royal baby.

Baboushka looked through the window. It was dawn! Clear on the air came the sound of the farm cockerel. She looked up. The star had gone. The kings would have found somewhere else to rest by now. She would easily catch them up.

At the moment, though, she felt so tired. Surely she could rest now — just for an hour.

Suddenly, she was wide awake. It was dark. She had slept all day! She ran out into the street. No star. She rushed back into the house, pulled on her cloak, hurriedly packed the toys in a basket and stumbled down the path the kings had taken.

On she went, hurrying through village after village. Everywhere she asked after the kings.

'Oh yes,' they told her, 'we saw them. They went that way.

Days passed and Baboushka lost count. The villages grew bigger and became towns. But Baboushka never stopped, through night and day. Then she came to a city.

The palace! she thought. That's where the royal baby would be born.

'No royal baby here,' said the palace guard.

'Three kings? What about them?' asked Baboushka.

'Ah yes, they came. But they didn't stay long. They were soon on their journey.'

'But where to?'

'Bethlehem, that was the place. I can't image why. It's a very poor place. But that's where they went.

She set off at once.

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The white rabbit continued

Continued from page 11.

His father's servitude to Laban, as Opa often put it, did not last seven years. After three years in the factory, his father was able to buy a store on the main street of the south Ontario town in which they lived.

On a raw day in late November they moved. All that day they hauled furniture and boxes out of the old house and moved them into the living quarters above the store — even Opa carried whatever he could. The boy's mother kept telling him not to strain himself, to carry lighter objects, and please! to wear a scarf, but Opa shrugged her off: "*Ach kind*, why don't you pack the kitchen things. We men will worry about the rest," he said, coughing as he helped guide the heavy pump organ onto the truck.

By mid-December the store was ready. Opa watched the painter put the finishing touches on the sign in the window: "Witte's Meats," the white letters painted in an arc just as they had been on the store window in Amsterdam.

The front of the store was brightly lit and often there was laughter, the boy's father presiding over the business with a ready wink in his eye. He would tell stories when the ladies of the congregation came in, for he was happy, and so were the women, to have a Dutch butcher in town. They would hold a hand to their mouths as they laughed, self-consciously hiding the ill-coloured caramel gums of their dentures.

"Sausage just as you like it from the old country," the boy's father would say, "with not too much garlic in it!"

Opa, too, was a different man, and the boy sensed it as he watched him in the back of the store. Opa did most of the actual butchering, taking the large pieces of meat that came from the packers and cutting them down to steaks, roasts, and chops.

The boy was both attracted and repelled by those huge slabs of meat carried into the dusky cutting room. He felt about the meat as he did about touching his tongue to a frozen bridge railing on the way to school: he knew the disastrous results of making contact, yet was inescapably drawn to do so. There was something both repulsive and magnetic about the huge carcasses hanging stiffly from the gleaming metal hooks on the cooler, red meat flecked with white fat, the purple liver, heart, and tongue dangling from the neck at the bottom. A pork chop lying under the front counter's stark fluorescent lights was one thing, but the meat carcasses hanging in the macabre light of the cooler resembled their former state closely enough to rouse fear in the boy. The smell of blood hung coldly in the air.

One day the boy stood in the cutting room watching Opa dress some meat, his frock so splotched with deep red blood it looked as if it had been washed in it. His accurate arm raised the cleaver and brought it down thwok! through a bone and onto the carving block. Then he went to the front.

The boy approached the block, drawn to the slab of red meat. White sinews rang through it like a river on a map, thin streams radiating from the main one. He brought his forefinger to touch the meat, and was surprised by its softness and wetness. As he drew his hand away he saw the blood on his finger. He looked for a place to wipe it, not wanting to clean it on his pants, but there was no rag in the room. He turned his finger along the side of the carving block and left a thin, snaky line. He looked at the cleaver, tried to lift it by the handle, and found it unexpectedly heavy. He rasped his thumb lightly across the sharp edge, then quickly withdrew his hand when he felt the keenness of the blade over each thin line of his thumbprint.

Then Opa returned, adjusted the meat on the block, and began cutting out the fat, the thin knife slicing easily through the meat. His hands were covered with blood, and moved deftly, without wasted motion. Then he took the meat to the front of the store, placed it in trays under the glass counter, and stepped into the cooler for another piece of meat.

He emerged cradling a slab of pork in his arms. When the huge door closed behind him with a heavy click, the boy imagined what it would be like locked in the cooler; he saw himself pounding on the door, screaming to be freed from his dark and cold imprisonment with those hulking corpses.

Opa began sharpening his knives, just as he had done before skinning the rabbit, and the boy saw again the stripping of the pelt that was just like the sound of ripping cloth.

"Are you going to be a butcher when you grow up, Joop?" Opa asked him in Dutch.

He had not expected the question, and was unsure of just how much lay behind it. He was the oldest son. How much had been decided for him?

"No Opa," he said.

"Why not?"

"I don't know. Don't like it, I guess."

"What will you be then?"

He did not know what to say. He felt only a desire, still chaotic, for a cleaner world than that of his grandfather, a world of order and light and no blood.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"But you *something* have to be," Opa said.

Then the boy felt the blood rising to his cheeks, and he blurted, "Well, I'm not going to be a butcher, that's for sure! That's all you do — cut up dead animals!" and what he expected then was a cuff on the head, as if he had said something profane.

But he felt his grandfather's heavy hand, covered with dried blood, resting on his head, and he heard, "That's all right, *m jongen*. There's no hurry. But in the meantime, throw these pieces of fat into that pail over there, will you?"

The boy looked up at his grandfather from beneath the heavy hand. Opa seemed serious.

He gathered the pieces of fat into his hands, threw them into the pail, and ran upstairs. There he washed his hands.

The boy's bedroom was up in the third story of the house, and he was fond of looking out the window at the people on the sidewalk across the street far below. Especially that winter he felt warm and safe there high in his heaven.

He watched the white snow settle on the pavement. Smoke drifted from the chimneys across the street. He placed his cheek against the cold window and looked up to see the flakes, wondering where so many could possibly come from. When he looked down at the snow against the red brick storefronts the flakes were white and they drifted lazily down, but when he looked up into the sky they were dark and they swirled angrily about.

That particular Christmas they had much to celebrate, what with the opening of the store. The spruce tree stood high, its silver peak reaching the ceiling. They had decorated the tree all together, sprinkling tinsel through the branches and hanging ornaments and coloured balls, and when his mother lit the candles in the room, the glow reflecting in the many ornaments, it seemed to him the tree contained a thousand candles.

His mother baked almond ring and *gevulde koek* and iced mocha tarts, and when some friends from the congregation came for the day, the men smoking fat Dutch cigars and drinking red wine, the room hung heavy with a pall of cigar smoke, and the smell of wine filled the house as it does in church during communion.

That evening he held his father's hand as they walked through the softly falling snow to church. His grandfather coughed again, and his mother said, "Opa, you should have worn your scarf," and he said to her, "Can't a man have a little cough nowadays?" In church, the many flickering candles made him drowsy so that he fell asleep, the soft notes of *Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht* drifting into his ears as his head nodded and then fell against his father's arm.

Opa lay propped against white pillows

Three days later the boy did not see his grandfather in the store. "Opa's not feeling well," his mother said, but he saw in her eyes the wild look of a small animal in fear.

That night he could not fall asleep. He left his door open and saw his mother running in and out of Opa's room next to his with a hot water bottle or a glass of hot anise milk. Finally he fell into a fitful sleep.

In the middle of the night he awoke and heard a voice feebly singing, and it was some time before he recognized the voice as Opa's. His grandfather was singing Dutch Psalms.

The boy lay there in the dark, suddenly awake, transfixed by the scratchy voice singing slightly off-key. The voice pulled him out of bed, for he felt it as the prelude to some revelation. He tiptoed stealthily through the darkness to the next door. It stood ajar. He peeked into the room and saw his father with his back to him, standing by Opa's bed, and his mother sitting forward in a chair by the bed, holding Opa's hand. They did not see him, although he felt certain they would hear the pounding of the blood at his temples.

Opa lay propped against white pillows. He was dressed in a nightshirt white as the snow. His eyes were closed, and his head with its shock of white hair rolled slightly to and fro according to the rhythm of the thin melody escaping from his bloodless lips.

Then his grandfather began to sing a song familiar to the boy, for he had heard it in church that Christmas:

Now may thy servant, Lord,
According to thy word,
Depart in exultation.

Opa finished the song in tremulous voice, the last frail notes seeming to hang frozen in the air.

The boy tiptoed back to his room. He climbed into bed and pulled the blankets over his head, for he felt he had seen a terrible beauty. And all he heard, over and over again, was the sound of the ripping of cloth, until it faded under the stronger echo of his grandfather's song.

Hugh Cook is Associate Professor of English at Redeemer College, Burlington, Ont. He is presently working on a novel. This story was previously published in the Wascana Review, vol. 13, no. 1.

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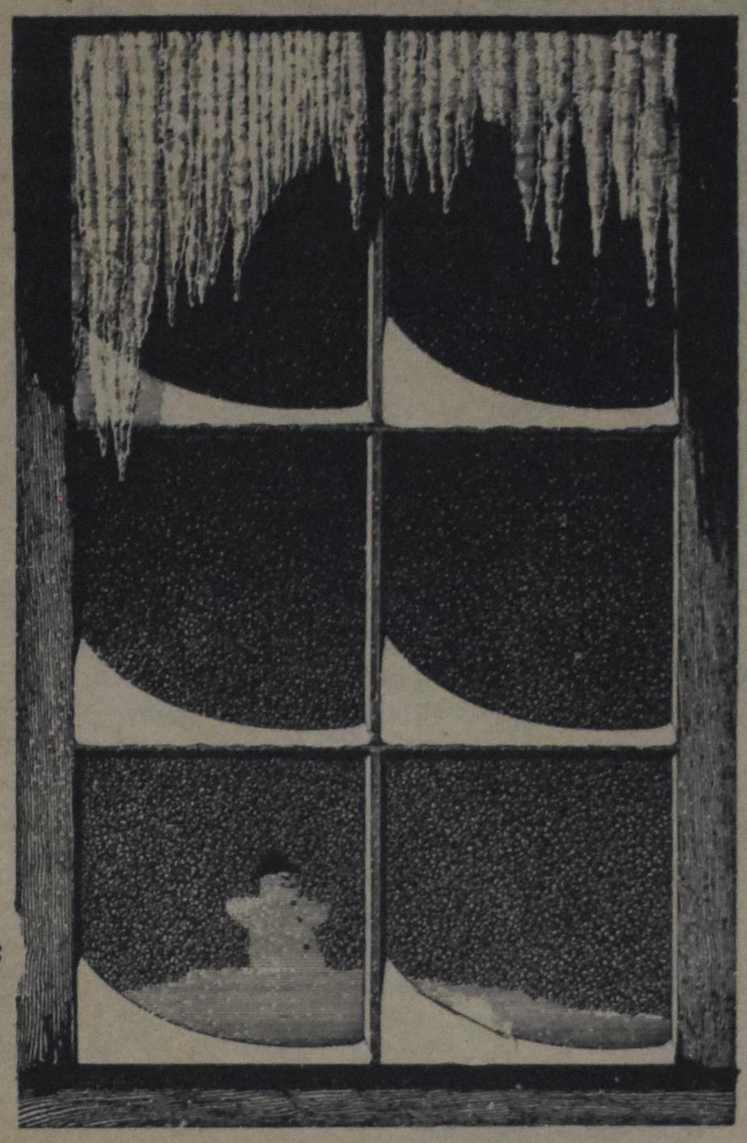
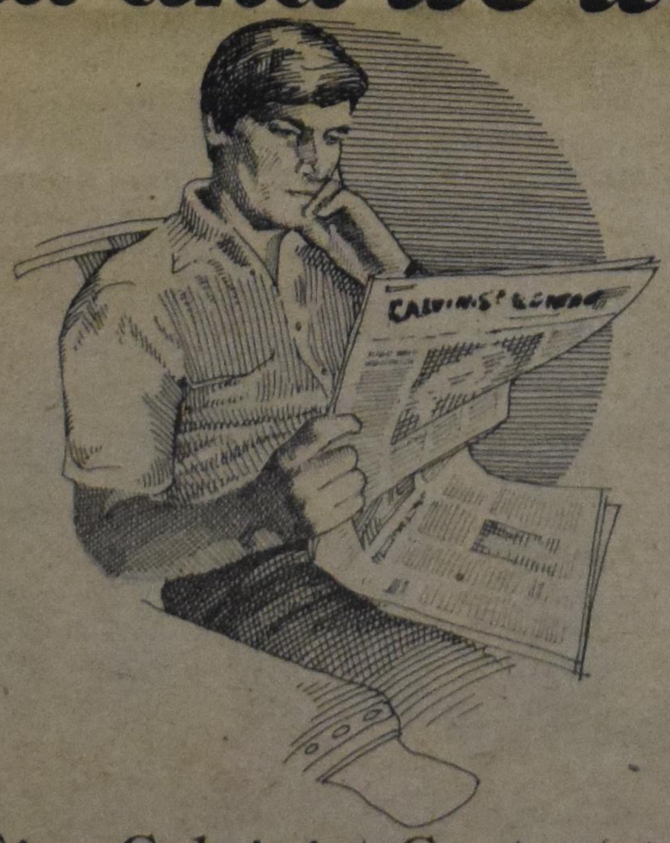
drawings by George Langbroek of St. Catharines, Ont.

Give the gift friends give at Christmas ....



... and we will give you a gift, too.



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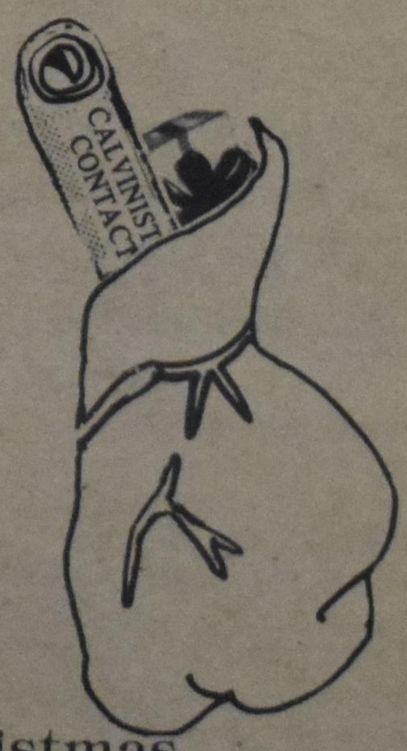

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CHRISTMAS POETRY

Christmas sestina

This is the season we remember a virgin
Bedded for birth on old straw in a stable.
In the chilly hills a drowsy band of shepherds
Muttered together. They did not know that heaven
Held a surprise for them: a chorus of angels
To announce a birth envisioned by the Magi.

Imagine the journey taken by foreign Magi
That ended humbly at the feet of a virgin:
Not in a palace but in the dirt of a stable,
Surrounded by common folk, peasants and shepherds,
Who could not read the signs in the stars of heaven—
But they had been alerted by the voices of angels.

Glory to God in the highest, the song of the angels;
Glory the spirit of the Gifts brought by the Magi,
With symbols of glory around her son, the virgin
Lay back in the glow of peace that filled the stable,
Wondering at the gentle touch of those shepherds,
And giving thanks for this miracle to heaven.

That was the night of the wondrous gift from heaven
Given to all mankind, heralded by the angels,
And emphasized by the adoration of the Magi;
The gift of perfect life born of a virgin;
A covenant fulfilled in the dark of a stable,
The birth of God attended by simple shepherds.

How many men would have stood in the shoes of those shepherds,
Disturbed in the dark of the night by voices from heaven
Singing salvation, then stumbled, directed by angles,
(Not dreaming that east of the hills came trawelling Magi)
To find at the edge of the village a simple young virgin
Had just given birth to a boy child, there in a stable.

The promise of God to man made flesh in a stable,
First revealed to the world through the eyes of shepherds:
A birth proclaimed by the perfect song out of heaven,
The most glorious duty ever performed by the angels;
A baby adored by peasants and marveling Magi,
Presented to the world in the arms of a virgin.

Christmas: the time of virgin birth in a stable,
A miracle caroled by an angels' chorus from heaven,
Witnessed by lowly shepherds and learned Magi.

Jeff Seffinga,
Hamilton, Ont.

Note:
The sestina, invented by the troubadour Arnaut Daniel (d. 1199), has six six-line stanzas and a three-line stanza. There is no rhyme, but the final words of the stanza recur in each of the other stanzas, and are arranged according to an intricate system. In the three line stanza (tercet) all six words are used, one in the middle of the line and one at the end.

Come and stand amazed!

Come and stand amazed, you people,
See how God is fond of you;
See fulfilled your inmost longing,
See this child both old and new.
See the Word enwrapped in silence,
See the ruler without might;
See who all is, yet so small is,
See who sun is in the night;
See who dear is and so near is,
Is deprived of all his right.

O Lord Jesus, God and manchild,
Who accepted this estate,
Through your heart pass my desiring,
Through your childhood my life's fate.
With your tender looks inspiring
Let your weakness give me drive;
Let your bondage give me freedom,
Let your need enrich my life;
Let your hardship make me joyful,
Let your death end all my strife.

(Translated from the Dutch hymn "Komt, Verwondert U Hier Mensen" by Bert Witvoet)

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like leaven"

Bethlehem, City of David, House of Bread,
what surprise shook those shepherds! As dead
men they arose in that bright night,
awe-struck by angels, sleepy-eyed, in fright.

Bethlehem, star chosen city of manna
above which the annunciating choir
sang peace to the world, set hearts afire
and flood-lit with grace the fields of Ephrata.

Bethlehem, city of David's Son,
city of manna descending from heaven:
in this night the promised Messiah has come—
House of Bread, O world, receive your leaven.

* *Matthew 13:33 The name* **Bethlehem** *means "house of bread."*

Frank Sawyer,
San Jose, Costa Rica

Old and New

Just once I'd like to hear only the bells
shake the frozen snow from their sides,
ring out in tripple notes what abides
as each century comes, recedes, swells
like the tide along a gutted shore
where in the midst the horizon is seen no more.

With a thud the clapper jars the ice
with such a sudden clang that heads jerk up.
Icycles dive down and spear-sharp cut
into the snow. The notes ring once, ring twice
and carry forth halos of silver sound.
The spruce trees shudder, let snow slide to the ground.

Near the window a candle waves its flame.
In the church hundreds come and kneel
while the bells keep making an appeal
to the Christ of old and new whose Name
goes forth across this frozen world tonight
and more than snow baptizes us in white.

Frank Sawyer,
San Jose, Costa Rica

Can U.S. guns stop communist religion?

Continued from page 9.

Trotsky thought such a revolution was imminent. The Comintern was formed to accellerate this process.

But Stalin soon retreated from world communism. In fact, to soothe Western feelings, he even ordered the Comintern disbanded. Stalin invented "socialism in one country," Russia. But then Stalin was a Russian nationalist, caring for little except Russian security.

Did Malenkov, briefly Stalin's successor, want world revolution? Remarkable about Malenkov was his attempt — doomed at birth — to change Stalin's policy of developing heavy industry, mainly to satisfy the military maw, to a policy of consumerism (butter instead of guns). He too cared little about the world outside.

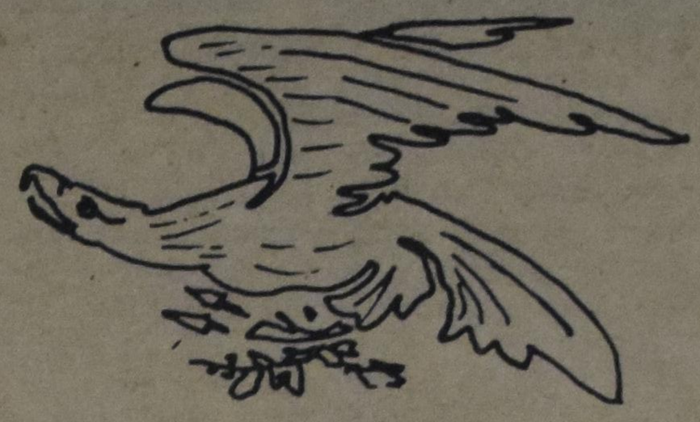
What about Khruschev? He certainly bragged about burying the West. He instigated the Cuban missile crisis, or at least orchestrated it. He suppressed the Hungarian counter-revolution and brought the Poles to heel. But most knowledgable people agree that Khruschev's brinkmanship and opportunism made him too much a liability. He was too erratic even for the Soviet leaders.

Kosygin and later Brezhnev consciously returned to a modified version of Stalin's "socialism in one country." The modification was that it did not exclude fomenting disorder abroad. That task, in the absence of the Comintern, fell to the Committee of State Security (KGB). But the Soviet approach to world communism became more opportunistic than doctrinaire, relying as it does on predictable U.S. reaction.

Force effective after all?

You can't fight ideas with guns, it is said. But what about the Latin American world? There guns have been eminently successful. Communism has made no demonstrable headway in Brazil, Argentina, El Salvador, Paraguay, Uraguay or Guatemala. Has the pernicious communist ideology, the godless religion, not been held at bay or else turned back?

But at what cost? To justice? Decency? Fairness? To the belief that Christ is Lord over all areas of life? Unlike communism, some might say, a military dictatorship is not necessarily totalitarian.



True, but a dictator will control all areas of life essential to his power base. In Latin America, that includes the church. Thus a dictatorship may at best seem like the lesser of two evils. But can we not find a better way than the use of guns?

As for communism, it's a religion, we are told, and must be stopped. Thus we continue to use force of arms to try to blunt the missionary zeal of Marx's militant disciples, while at the same time leaving the harvest fields of the Third World open to communist ideology. But this crude message has failed to persuade client dictators to set their people free. And thus, without the christian message, these hapless millions have no choice other than to kill or be killed.

Next Issue: Fortress America-Mother Russia

Jim Van Oosterom is a freelance writer and historian living in St. Catharines, Ont.

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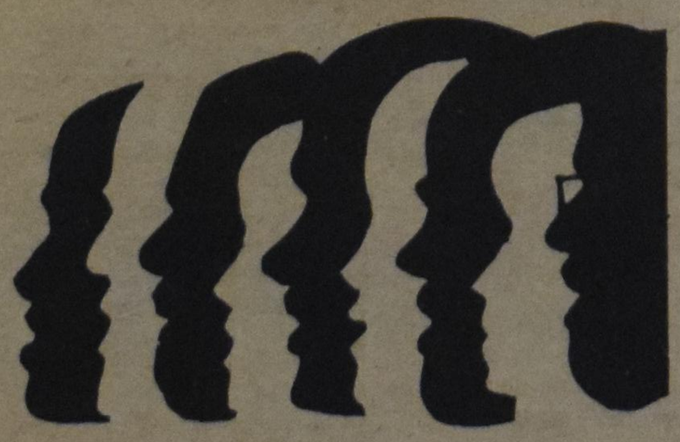

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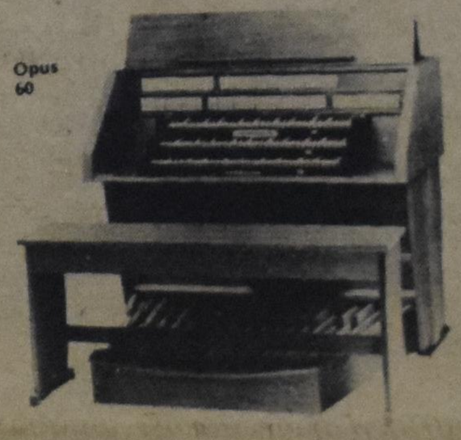

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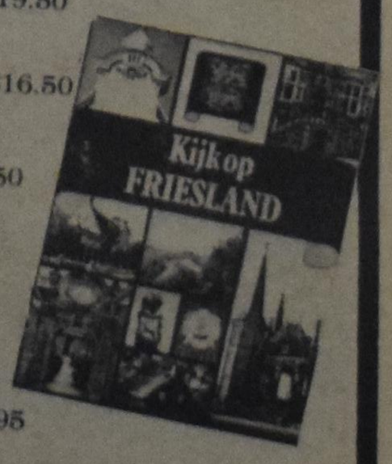

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THANKS

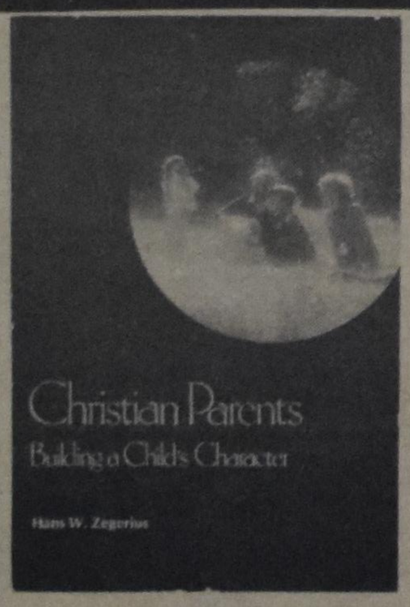
HUIZINGA: We would like to thank all, relatives and friends for their christian love and sympathy expressed in the many cards and letters, flowers, food and memorial donations. Also for your personal presence at the funeral of our husband, and father, grandfather, great-grandfather.
Mrs. Gepke Huizinga and family, Cornwall, Ont.

BIRTHS

BIESHEUVEL: We are grateful to God for new life he has given. STEPHANIE MAGDALENA was born November 14, 1983; 10 lbs. 5 ½ oz. Another granddaughter for Mr. and Mrs. Gerrit Biesheuvel of Weesp, The Netherlands and for Mr. and Mrs. Henry Zantingh of Chatham, Ont. A sister for Naomi.
Barend and Petra Biesheuvel, 1400 Mary St., West, Thunder Bay, ON P7E 4N1

BYDEVAATE: We thankfully announce the arrival of our daughter, LINDSEY JANE on November 10, 1983. She is a sister for Jody, the 2nd grandchild for Mrs. C. Bydevaate of Zierikzee, The Netherlands and the 14th grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. P. Bos of Barnwell, Alberta.
Casey and Jane Bydevaate, Box 735, Taber, AB T0K 2G0

DEBOER: John and Louise thank God for the precious gift of their fourth child, MATTHEW JOHNATHAN, born on November 14, 1983. He is a new brother for Jason, Darryl and Marlisa. Eleventh grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Batterink of Woodstock, and seventh grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. Klaas DeBoer of Desboro.
R.R.#4, Tara, ON N0H 2N0



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BIRTHS

CAPELLE: With much joy, we, Art and Marg, thank and praise God, the Giver of all life, for entrusting into our care another precious gift, a daughter, SANDRA LEE, born on Wednesday, September 28, 1983. Beautiful little sister for Daniel. She is the 6th grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. John Vanderlinde of Sarnia, Ont., and 2nd grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. Jasper Capelle of Churchill, Ont.
Give thanks to the Lord of Lords ... to Him who alone works great wonders, for His Covenant love is everlasting" (Psalm 136:3,4).
330 Collingwood St., Sarnia, ON N7T 6N4

ENGAGEMENT

KOOIMAN-SPRATT: "Every good and perfect gift is from above" (James 1:17a).
Mrs. Hilda Kooiman, of Stoney Creek, Ont., joyfully announces the engagement of her daughter, FLORENCE to DOUGLAS, son of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Spratt of Vancouver, BC. The wedding will take place, D.V., on Saturday, January 7, 1984 at twelve noon, in the Third Christian Reformed Church, Edmonton, Alberta. Rev. Tom Oosterhuis officiating.
Correspondence address: F. Kooiman, 9103-77 Ave., Edmonton AB T6C 0M1

ANNIVERSARIES

Matsqui, BC Georgetown, Ont.
With praise and thanksgiving we are happy to celebrate the 30th Wedding Anniversary of our parents and grandparents on December 3, 1983.

JOHN and GERTRUDE DE JONG
(nee Jansen)

With love from their children and grandchildren:
Helen & Eric Kort; Christopher, David & Shawna — Stoney Creek, Ont.
Joanne & Robert De Jonge; Cheryl, Jennifer — Stoney Creek, Ont.
Steve — Georgetown, Ont.
Tom — Georgetown, Ont.
Sandra & Bill Haan; Dana & Richard — Georgetown, Ont.
Sharon — Georgetown, Ont.
Home address: 7 Hillside Dr., Georgetown, ON L7G 4W2

Amerongen Sarnia
1943 1983
With thanksgiving to the Lord we are happy to announce the 40th Wedding Anniversary on December 16, 1983, of our parents and grandparents,

JOHN and CO VEENENDAAL
(Schouten)

May the Lord continue to bless you and keep you both in his care.
With love and congratulations from your children and grandchild:
Joanne & Nadia; Mary-Ann
Open house: December 17, 1983 from 3-5 p.m., in the Second Chr. Ref. Church.
Home address: 1006 Murphy Rd., Sarnia, ON N7S 2Y2

Rijnsburg Fruitland
1948 November 25 1983
With joy and thankfulness to the Lord, we are pleased to announce the 35th Wedding Anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

ROELOF and ANGENIETA VELDMAN
(nee Jungerius)

It is our hope that the Lord will grant you many more years together:
Love and congratulations from:
Fred & Henrietta; Nathan, Benjamin — Stoney Creek
Bill & Wendy — Caistor Centre
Joan & Harry; Jennifer, Stephanie, Ashley — St. George
Home address: 288 Fruitland Rd., Fruitland, ON L0R 1L0

Congratulations and best wishes

ANNIVERSARIES

Soli Deo Gloria
Heerenveen Brampton
1933 December 7 1983
With joy and thankfulness to our Lord, we are happy to announce the 50th Wedding Anniversary of our beloved parents and grandparents,

ANNE and TINIE ADEMA
(nee Van Der Werf)

"May the Lord continue to bless and to guide you, and to keep you in his care, which he has shown to us so vividly in the past."
Love and congratulations from all of us:
Grace & Neal VanGalen; Con, Anita — London, Ont.
Vera & Bill Rekker; Arthur, Paul — Brampton, Ont.
Wietze & Sharon Adema; Jordan — Grand Rapids, Mich.
Mary & Ted Jurrius; Mark, Tonya — Brampton, Ont.
Reina & Bill Pagie; Derek, Danielle — Montreal, PQ
Home address: 7900 McLaughlin Rd., S., Apt. 2102, Brampton, ON L6V 3N2

1958 Iron Springs 1983
With gratitude to God, we celebrate 25 years of his faithfulness to us and to our children,

ALBERT and AUDREY KOLK
(nee Van Roon)

Children:
John & Laura Kolk; Ashley — Iron Springs
Thriesa & Mark Hubers — Buchanan, Liberia
Verna — at home
Claude — at home (Judy, fiancee)
Donna — Dordt College
Leighton — at home
Home address: Box 329, Picture Butte, AB T0K 1V0

Nijverdal, Holland Red Deer, Alta.
1928 Psalm 136 1983
"O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His steadfast love endures forever."
Joining in praise and thanksgiving to God we wish to congratulate our parents with their 55th Wedding Anniversary,

JAN KRAANENBORG
and
ZWAANTJE KRANENBORG
(nee De Leeuw)

on December 22, 1983. Their thankful children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.
Jo & Henk Opden Dries — Rocky Mountain House, Alta.
Henny & Tony Middag — Lacombe, Alta.
John & Shan Kranenborg — Lavington, BC
Henry & Rika Kranenborg — Red Deer, Alta.
Karl & Brenda Kranenborg — Penhold, Alta.
Open house will be held December 22, 1983 at 27 Manning St., Red Deer, Alta., from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. and from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Home address: 3837-47th St., Red Deer, AB T4N 1N6

Blenheim, Ont. Toronto, Ont.
December 6
"In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct their paths" (Prov. 3:6).
With joy and thankfulness to our God, we, the children of

KENNETH and LUCILLE SJAARDA
(nee Wielhouwer)

are happy to announce the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our parents and grandparents.
Bill & Sharon Folkerts; Renee, Ian — Rexdale, Ont.
Charles & Elizabeth Speelman (engaged)
James & Betty Ann Eggengoor (friend)
Carol — at home
Home address: 58 Genthorn Ave., Rexdale, ON M9W 2S9

ANNIVERSARIES

1958 December 12 1983
With joy and thankfulness to our heavenly Father we are happy to celebrate the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our parents,

EVERET and IRENE KRAAYENBRINK

Sandra & Peter Hillen; Jessica
Alvin
Lorraine
Open reception will be held at the Parish Hall, John St., Port Lambton on Monday, December 12, 1983 at 7:30 p.m.
Home address: R.R.1, Port Lambton, ON N0P 2B0

OBITUARIES

"My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of Heaven and earth" (Psalm 121).
On November 9, 1983, the Lord took unto himself,

JANNA BOTH
(nee Kasius)

at the age of 75.
Beloved wife of Dick Both.
Dear mother of:
Pete & Eleanor — Owen Sound
Hendrik & Geraldine — Smithville
Dick & Mary — Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Dear grandmother of nine grandchildren.
Also survived by 3 sisters and 2 brothers in The Netherlands.
Funeral took place at the Owen Sound Chr. Ref. Church, November 12, 1983. Rev. Dan Gritter officiated.
Home address: Box 43, R.R.#4, Tara, ON N0H 2N0

On Friday, October 21, 1983, the Lord called to eternal glory, our dear sister and aunt,

HENNIE BROUWER

at the age of 60 years.
Daughter of the late Willem and Alida Brouwer.
Dear sister of:
Bill & Frieda Brouwer — Lynden, Washington
Sid & Corrie Brouwer — Forest, Ont.
Phil Brouwer — Woodstock, Ont.
Elizabeth & Elbert Karelsen — Sarnia, Ont.
Tony & Francis Brouwer — Cambridge, Ont.
John & Trudy Brouwer — London, Ont.
Survived also by stepmother Mrs. E. Brouwer-Vanbarneveld — Sarnia, Ont.
Lovingly remembered by 14 nephews and 9 nieces.
"Behold I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5).
Funeral service was held in Forest Chr. Ref. Church, Tuesday, October 25, 1983, with Rev. R. Vanden Berg of Waterloo, Ont. officiating.
Burial took place in Lakeview Cemetary, Sarnia, Ont.
Home address: R.R.#1, Forest, Ont.

March 1, 1909 Nov. 12, 1983
"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38, 39).
On Saturday, November 12, 1983, our Lord called to eternal glory, our father, grandfather and great-grandfather,

GEORGE MUIZELAAR

Beloved husband of the late Dorothy Van Solkema (1969)
Father of:
Raymond & Alice Muizelaar — Jarvis, Ont.
Ruth & Peter Hogeterp — Jarvis, Ont.
Ada & Jake Elgersma — Waterford, Ont.
Dave & Jane Muizelaar — Picture Butte, Alberta
Grandfather of: 16 grandchildren and 1 great-granddaughter.

OBITUARIES

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1).
On November 16, 1983, the Lord called Home our beloved wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother,

DIENA DYKSTRA
(nee Riemersma)

at the age of 79.
Loving wife of Dirk Dykstra.
Lovingly remembered by their children:
Fennie & Albert Hazelaar — Redcliff, Alta.
Glen & Mattie Dykstra — Lethbridge, Alta.
Shirley & John Bos — Redcliff, Alta.
Wyke & Fred Kruitbosch — Redcliff, Alta.
Peter & Sylvia Dykstra — Medicine Hat, Alta.
Tina Dykstra & Bernhard Wolleben — Vancouver, BC
and sister Shirley De Jong — Grand Rapids, Mich.
Dear grandmother of 26 children and great-grandmother of 2 children.
Funeral service was held November 21, 1983 at the Chr. Ref. Church of Medicine Hat.
Home address: 376-4th Street N.W., Medicine Hat, Alta.

On Wednesday, November 2, 1983, the Lord took unto himself into eternal glory, our dear brother and brother-in-law,

TRYNCO LINKER

dearly beloved wife of Jantje Linker (nee VanderVeen).
"I am the resurrection and the life, he who believes in me will live, even though he dies, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die."
Strathroy, Ontario
L. & G. Van Ry (Linker)
G. Kobes (Linker)
B. & W. Linker (Vander Velde)
The Netherlands
J. & H. Linker (Kobes)
H. & J. Rodenboog (Linker)
Wed. D. Linker (Homan)
G. & T. Linker (Linker)

PERSONAL

28-year-old professional, single woman with a quiet and sunny disposition would like to correspond with a single, christian, professional gentleman between 28-38. If you also have been busy with your career, would enjoy a new friendship and someone to share your interests please reply to Box 4781, Calvinist Contact, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 4L3. All replies will be held in strict confidence.

Would the lady who was at the Single Fellowship Day in Woodbridge, and who talked and walked with me please give her phone number and address to: Box #4782, Calvinist Contact, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, Ontario. And she will receive a reply.

Oudere weduwnaar, gerieflijk, 2 slaapkamer huis, 5 miles van Chr. Ref. Church, in S.W. Ontario, zoekt iemand die met hem samen wil wonen. Hulp voor huishoudelijk werk en de was aanwezig, als dat nodig is. Brieven onder #4783, Calvinist Contact, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3.

MISCELLANEOUS

Attention Alumni
of Timothy Christian School Rexdale. A beautiful hardcover book, filled with pictures and anecdotes of the history of your school is still available in limited supply. Send $12.00, post-paid, per copy to: Mrs. M. Doorduin, 15 College St., Rexdale, M9V 1H4.

Classifieds

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Eastern Ont. Christian Senior Citizen Home
220 Viewmount Drive, Nepean K2E 7M5

To all our friends and Families
a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

May GOD's blessing rest upon you for 1984.

Mr. A. Bergsma	Apt. 226
Mrs. C. Boersma	Apt. 203
Mr./Mrs. D. Buwalda	Apt. 123
Mr./Mrs. J. deQuartel	Apt. 222
Mrs. A. Diepeveen	Apt. 207
Mr. W. Harbers	Apt. 116
Mr./Mrs. F. Hess	Apt. 213
Mrs. L. Hoogeveen	Apt. 307
Mrs. V. Jansen	Apt. 308
Mrs. I. Kaldeway	Apt. 117
Miss Mary Kaldeway	Apt. 217
Mr./Mrs. E. Kalverda	Apt. 125
Mr./Mrs. R. Klein	Apt. 227
Mrs. C. Kuiper	Apt. 221
Mrs. F. Lubbers	Apt. 209
Miss Dina Lubbers	Apt. 209
Mr./Mrs. J. Moerman	Apt. 311
Mr./Mrs. J. Odink	Apt. 303
Mrs. R. Ritskes	Apt. 301
Mr./Mrs. L. Snippe	Apt. 113
Mr./Mrs. W. Schinkel	Apt. 104
Mrs. M. Triemstra	Apt. 119
Mrs. A. van Abbema	Apt. 102
Mrs. P. Vanden Bergen	Apt. 304
Mrs./Mrs. W. Vande Kemp	Apt. 306
Mr./Mrs. G. Wynia	Apt. 309
Mr./Mrs. L. Zuiderveen	Apt. 201

HELP WANTED

POSITIONS

Therapists: Full-time and Part-time

SALEM

SALEM'S BASIS AND PURPOSE:
Salem Christian Counselling Association operates three full-time and four part-time clinics in Southern Ontario. Salem is dedicated to providing the best possible professional counselling from a Christian perspective.

QUALIFICATIONS:
Masters in psychology or social work minimum. Clinical experience necessary. Flexibility and the capacity to work independently within a team setting is a definite asset. A full-time position is currently available in the St. Catharines Clinic. There are possible part-time positions in the regions east and west of Toronto.

RETURN APPLICATION/RESUME TO:

Dr. Donald W. Moncrieff, Ph.D.
Salem Christian Counselling Clinic
128 Willowdale Avenue, Willowdale, Ontario M2N 4Y2

REDEEMER COLLEGE

invites applications for the position of **Academic Dean.** The appointment will commence on July 1, 1984.
The Academic Dean is responsible for administering the academic program of the College and will be expected to teach one course per term in his/her area of expertise. The applicant for this position should hold the doctorate, have an established record in scholarship and teaching, and possess strong administrative and interpersonal relations skills. This person must be committed to the Reformed Christian basis of the College and understand the importance of research in a Christian liberal arts college.
Inquiries and applications should be directed to the search committee, in care of:

Rev. H.R. De Boister, President
REDEEMER COLLEGE
467 Beach Boulevard Hamilton, Ontario L8H 6W8

TEACHERS

Vancouver Christian Secondary School is the high-school campus of Vancouver Christian School, an interdenominational school offering Grades K - XII. The highschool expects to enroll some 160 students for 84/85.
VCSS invites inquiries from persons interested in the principalship of the school. Applicants must be articulate Christians, should show an interest in curriculum development, have proven administrative ability, and be able to understand supporters and parents of varying Christian backgrounds.

Inquiries should be directed to:
Search Committee
Vancouver Christian Secondary School
3496 Haida Drive, Vancouver, BC V5M 3Z4

"Applications are now being received for the position of **Teaching Principal** at **John Knox Christian School** in Mississauga (Clarkson) Ont., beginning September 1984.
The School is looking for a person with proven teaching, leadership and administration ability. Applicant should be able to articulate a clear Biblical and Reformed perspective on Christian Education.
Please submit a resume, and letter of reference along with academic qualifications to the Education Committee of the Board.

c/o Mr. J. Bootsma
1367 Shadowa Rd.
Mississauga, ON L5H 2N6

Deadline for Applications is January 14, 1984. Interviews will take place the week of January 23-27, 1984."

HELP WANTED

Calvin College

a Christian liberal arts college in the Reformed tradition

is seeking candidates for faculty positions in Mathematics, Computer Science, and Statistics. These positions involve both teaching and research from a Reformed, Christian perspective. Persons with a Ph.D. degree and appropriate professional background are invited to send a resume, by February 1, 1984, to:

Dr. Carl J. Sinke, Chairman
Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
Calvin College
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
(616) 957-3652

EMPLOY WANTED

Dutch girl, 19, will complete high school in June, 1984, would like to work in Canada for one year. If you can help call 519-336-4430 or write Brian Roffel, 1025 Frost Ave., Sarnia, ON N7S 4G6

BUSINESS

Evangelistic materials in Arabic. Also, a handbook in English, **The Bible & Islam** ($1.95). Arabic Ministry, The Back to God Hour, P.O. Box 5070, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8.

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- ★ "Richdel" solenoid valves
- ★ "Leader" exhaust and circulating fans
- ★ "Aerovent" exhaust and circulating fans

TEACHERS

CHATHAM: Chatham District Christian Secondary School requires a part-time **Art Teacher** to teach an art course from January 30, 1984 till June 15, 1984. If interested, please contact the principal H. Proper, at 90 Park Ave., E., Chatham, ON N7M 3B4 or please phone: (519) 352-4591 (school).

GEORGETOWN: The Georgetown District Chr. School is in need of a **grade 3** teacher as of March 1, 1984. Applicants with a major or minor in French are especially invited to apply. Please send applications to the Principal, George Petrusma, R.R.#1, Georgetown, ON L7G 4S4. Phone 877-4221 (office) 877-6444 (res.)

BOWMANVILLE: Knox Christian School invites applications for a **Grade 7** teaching position. Duties to commence **immediately** or no later than January 1, 1984. Send applications to: Knox Christian School, c/o J.W. Van Manen, Principal, R.R.1, Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K2; telephone: (416) 623-5871 (school) or 728-1030 (home).

FOR RENT

Florida: 2 bedroom furnished mobile home in West Palm for the months of December, January, March, April; $450.00 U.S.; close to all conveniences and Chr. Ref. Church in Lake Worth. Call days: 1-416-226-9800, after 5 p.m. 1-416-884-8869.

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Events

Calendar

Dec. 2	King's College Christmas program to be held in St. John's Anglican Church (11111 - 57 Ave.), Edmonton.
Dec. 7	Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario Annual Convention & Banquet, University of Guelph, Peter Clark Hall. Theme: "Agriculture, Technology, and Stewardship." Time: 10:00 a.m., Banquet: 6:00 p.m. For pre-registration call C.F.F.O., Harriston, at (519) 338-2921, evenings, (519) 338-3214.
Dec. 18	Brampton Chr. Choral Society presents Christmas Contata "Story of Bethlehem" at 8 p.m. in Second CRC of **Brampton.**
Dec. 17	Christmas Concert by the Choirs & Brass directed by Leendert Kooy at 8:00 p.m. in Rehoboth Chr. Ref. Church, Sugog St., **Bowmanville.**
Dec. 21	Christmas Concert by the Choirs & Brass directed by Leendert Kooy at 8:00 p.m. in the Willowdale United Church, Kenneth Ave., (behind the Northtown Plaza), **Willowdale.**

Christmas Concert by the Bell Canto Christian Choral Society, **London;** The St. Thomas Ladies Choir and District Male Choir. **Dec. 11**, 8:15 p.m. at Bethel CRC, **London and Dec. 18**, 8:00 p.m. at First United Church, St. George St., **St. Thomas.**

Next Issue

Dated	Mailed	Deadline for classified ads	Deadline for other advertising
Fri. Dec. 9	Tues. Dec. 6	Thurs. Dec. 1-8:30a.m.	Wed. Nov. 30-8:30a.m.
Fri. Dec. 16	Tues. Dec. 13	Thurs. Dec. 8-8:30a.m.	Wed. Dec. 7-8:30a.m.
Fri. Dec. 23	Tues. Dec. 20	Thurs. Dec. 15-8:30a.m.	Wed. Dec. 14-8:30a.m.

"Agriculture, Technology and Stewardship"
Annual Convention & Banquet
CHRISTIAN FARMERS FEDERATION OF ONTARIO

Wednesday, December 7, 1983, D.V.
— 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Banquet: 6:00 p.m. —

LOCATION: Peter Clark Hall, University Centre, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario
CONVENTION SPEAKERS: Keynote Speaker: Harry Antonides, Director of Research and Education, Christian Labour Association of Canada, Toronto
TOPIC: "Computer: Servant or Master?"
Afternoon Speaker: George Atkins, P.Ag., Director, Developing Countries Farm Radio Network, Oakville
TOPIC: "Bridges Across the South"
Banquet Speaker: Dr. Harry Cook, Professor of Biology, The King's College, Edmonton, Alberta
TOPIC: "Genetic Engineering for Agriculture"
MUSIC & SONG: "Immanuel Singers" - a vocal & instrumental group from the Harriston-Palmerston area will provide us with selections of music and song.
CONVENTION FEE: $15.00, students: $3.00. **BANQUET FEE:** $15.00
For Pre-registration call:
CFFO Office, Hariston
at (519) 338-2921, evenings (519) 338-3214
DEADLINE: Monday at noon, December 5

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(416) 826-4141 **(416) 820-2385**

Hamilton District Christian High Choir and Band
presents a Christmas Concert

Date: December 14, 1983
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: HDCH Auditorium
Tickets: $2.00 per person
$5.00 per family

LET'S PLAY CHESS

Editor: Pete Layer

#984

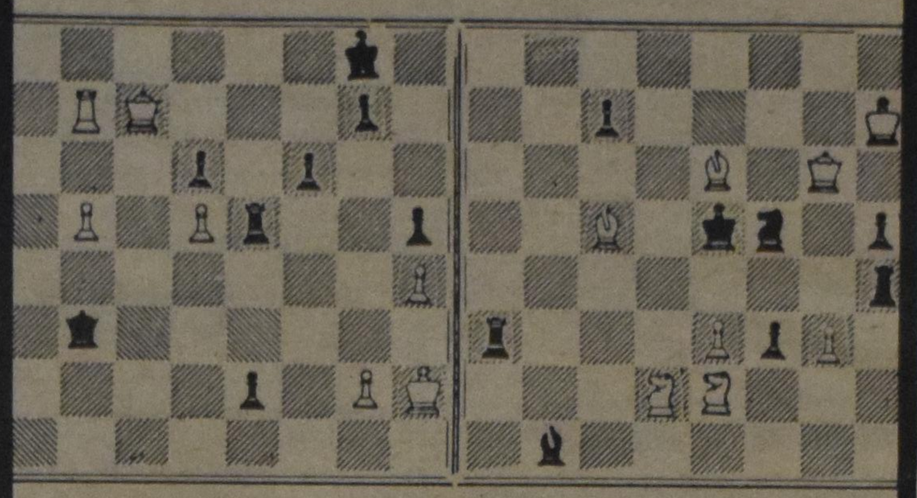
Game Position

8

#985

V.E. Chepisni, Russia, 1958

7



7
Black to play and mate in 5 moves or less - 3 pts.

8
2-mover 2 pts.

NOTES
1. It's all or nothing for Black in #984. White threatens with QxNP mate. In most cases, a Pawn about to promote (K7) cannot help Black. Yet Black can mate White in five moves or less. It's up to you to find the winning combination.
2. If White were to move his Queen, the Black Knight can move and check the King. Keep this in mind while solving and your task is made easier. Please indicate the key and threat, if any.
3. The deadline will appear with the second series.

Christmas

A questionable story

Everychild's Christmas, Lee Taylor, Taylor Publishing, P.O. Box 413, Anacortes, WA 98221; $3.95, paperbound. Berta Hosmar, Whitby, Ont.

This booklet is really a rather long poem, and it tells us about the struggle everybody (Everychild) has growing up and finding a place for himself in society. Much of the innocence and beauty of childhood is lost in the process of maturing, and the author feels that "Everychild" is really the victim of the adults around him who have, "pushed, directed, ordered, manipulated, trapped and exploited" him.

In my opinion this book has several positive points. I liked the imagery and the poem is beautiful and easy to read and understand. The illustrations are very attractive and the author succeeds in creating an atmosphere of longing for a new creation, and makes us realize again that we really live in "Paradise lost."

Yet I have some criticism. Does the author visualize a society that demands very little of her innocent "Everychild"? I'm afraid that, in that case, we would be left with a generation of undisciplined hippies, with a "Love God and do as you please" religion.

Also, the Christian message in this book is very weak. In this Christmas poem Christ's deliverance from sin is not mentioned. Instead, the author wishes that the "birthday of the Christchild, the advent of brotherhood, the celebration of peace on earth may bring life forever free to "Everychild"! Considering the contents of this poem, I cannot wholeheartedly recommend it to the readers of *Calvinist Contact*.

Netherlands bazaar

The members of the Committee "Netherlands Bazaar" express their deepest thanks to all those who have contributed time, effort and money to aid the fundraising for "The Netherlands Bazaar" held on Saturday, October 22, 1983.

The Bazaar was a huge success because of the generosity of the many people involved. We have benefitted from countless gifts of goods, advice, money, skills, time and moral support.

Our thanks to the The Netherlands Consulate, Churches, Businesses, Radio and T.V. Announcers, Newspapers, Organizations, Men, Women, Youth and Children without whom this tremendously successful Bazaar would never have happened.

It is with pleasure and sincere gratitude that thanks to you all we reached our goal of a net amount of **$45,000.00.**

This money will enable us to continue our work for the next two years by bringing some sunshine into the lives of the *many needy* Canadian families of Dutch extraction in the Province of Ontario.

Thank you again for your thoughtfulness and support, we could not have made it without YOU.

Ge Spaans, President

Don't forget ... It's time to extend Christmas greetings through C.C.

Just a reminder that the deadline for seasons greetings to appear in the December 23 issue is Friday, December 9.

Every year hundreds of subscribers to Calvinist Contact use the special classified section to extend their seasons greetings to family and friends. Kindly enclose payment of $15. with your ad and send it in today. Forget the fuss of Christmas cards and postage stamps; one ad does it all.

Calvinist Contact
99 Niagara St.,
St. Catharines, ON
L2R 4L3

Dutch

Wat denk jij van de staking in British Columbia?

Als je't mij vraagt

Syrt wolters

Misschien hebben onze lezers in andere provincies er niet zoveel belang bij om deze vraag beantwoord te zien; toch zit er wel wat voor ons allemaal in om van te leren. Om te beginnen heb ik nooit goed kunnen begrijpen hoe regeringsambtenaren het recht van staking gekregen hebben. Dat gaat mij boven mijn bijna versleten petje. 'k Heb de ambtenaren altijd beschouwd als de uitvoerende arm van de overheid. De overheid of regering maakt wetten en de ambtenaren zorgen er voor dat daaraan uitvoering gegeven wordt.

Kunt u zich nu voorstellen, dat er een lichaam is, dat aan een bepaald lichaamsdeel het recht geeft om ongehoorzaam te zijn aan dat lichaam? Aan de ene kant zien we de regering, die besluiten neemt en tot haar uitvoerende "arm," de ambtenarij zegt: Hier is wat we besloten hebben; zorg er voor dat het uitgevoerd wordt, maar als jullie te eniger tijd om welke reden dan ook, daaraan geen trek hebt, dan mogen jullie ons de dienst opzeggen en gaan staken! Is dat geen hopeloze onzin?

En kunt u zich nog herinneren wanneer de federale ambtenaren dit recht van staking kregen? Dat was onder de minister-president Lester Pearson in de midden 60's. En weet u nog wie toen Minister van Justitie was, van wiens tafel dit brok wetgeving kwam? Dat was onze tegenwoordige minister-president Pierre Trudeau!

Toen het federale hek open gegooid was, volgden de provinciale hekken al spoedig. Dus, practisch door geheel Canada kan de "arm," de ambtenarij, de gehoorzaamheid opzeggen aan het "lichaam," de regering. Wie heeft het ooit zo zout gegeten?

En, bijna als een natuurlijk gevolg kregen de ambtenarenbonden het "recht van bedingen." En weet u wat een van de eerste dingen, die men bedong was? Dat iedere ambtenaar bij de regering verplicht lid moet zijn van de regerings ambtenarenbond. Dus daar kregen we het geval dat een bepaalde groep belastingbetalers het recht kreeg om andere belastingbetalers te boycotten van ambtenaar te zijn of worden. En of je het nu eens kon zijn met hun filosofie van "Bedingen" of niet, het maakt geen verschil: aansluiten of eruit! "Wees mijn broeder of ik sla je de hersens in."

Tijdens de laatste verkiezings-compagne heeft Mr. William Bennett duidelijk gezegd dat ernstige bezuinigingsmaat-regelen genomen zouden worden, als hij weer herkozen zou worden. Hij werd weer herkozen en, in zijn overmoed, heeft hij, dunkt mij, al te drastisch gehandeld. Hij had voorspeld dat het ambtenarenleger sterk besnoeid zou worden. Nou, dat heeft hij blijkbaar gedaan, tenminste hij ging ontslag briefjes rondzenden bij de vleet. Mensen die er al jaren gewerkt hadden, kregen een briefje op hun bureau: Met ingang van morgen hebben we je niet meer nodig. Je salaris zal tot het eind van de volgende maand nog uitbetaald worden, maar daarna is de kous af!

Ik kan me best voorstellen dat een heleboel mensen daar wild om werden. En toen ging de ambtenarenbond zich ermee bemoeien en dreigde met staking als daar niet verandering in kwam. En toen de regering niet wilde wijken ging men staken.

En, om kracht bij te zetten, bewogen ze de onderwijzers in de openbare school om ook te gaan staken. Moet je horen: zo midden in een wettelijk contract, gaan staken over iets wat hen helemaal niet raakte! Sommige schooldistricten hebben de rechter gevraagd om een "injunctie" een tussenbeide komen. De rechter zei: De staking van de onderwijzers is onwettig. Toen zeiden sommige schoolbesturen tot de onder-wijzers: Wie staakt, krijgt ontslag. De schooldistricten die zo'n "injunctie" gevraagd hadden, bleven doordraaien, maar andere scholen moesten sluiten vanwege de staking.

De volgende stap zou zijn om al de gemeenteambtenaren er in te betrekken en het veerboten systeem. Het zou uiteindelijk op een algemene staking uitlopen. Ter elfder ure kwam de leider van de IWA er aan te pas. Dat is, nota bene, de leider van de International Woodworkers Association. Wat in de wereld heeft een logger-organisatie te maken met een ambtenarengeschil? Maar die heeft gedaan weten te krijgen dat de regering met verdere ontslagen de ambtenarenbond zou raadplegen.

Toen was de staking over en alles werkt weer normaal. Tenminste, zo lang het duurt, want men is nog lang niet tevreden.

Die hele staking vond ik een misselijk gedoe. In naam van "menselijk recht" werd het recht van hulpbehoevenden en zieken totaal genegeerd. Wat me het meest hindert is dat onder de stakers zoveel Christenen zijn, die zich in de eerste plaats in de luren hebben laten leggen door lid te worden van een organisatie die met het gebod van "liefde tot God en liefde tot de naaste" geen rekening houdt. In een staking zoals deze zijn deze Christenen slachtoffer geworden van hun eigen daad van onvoorzichtigheid.

Soms vraag ik me wel eens af of het niet de Christenen in die organisaties zijn, die de grootste verantwoordelijkheid dragen voor een staking. Als al de Christenen in die organisaties eens gingen "beleven" wat ze zeggen te geloven en te belijden door te weigeren zich te laten "gelijkschakelen" met de seculaire wereld, ik denk dat het de ruggegraat van die organisaties zou breken.

We zijn veel te timide. We zingen "dare to be a Daniel," maar als het er op aankomt, gaan we door de knieën bij het eerste zuchtje. God zij ons land genadig.

Syrt Wolters

Uw Canadese Leger

Canada is nooit een militair agressief land geweest.

Maar als er een beroep op werd gedaan hebben de vrijwillige mannen en vrouwen van het Canadese leger hun taken volbracht met onzelfzuchtige plichtsbetrachting. In het leger van vandaag worden de ervaringen en tradities van het verleden gebruikt om de uitdagingen en de eisen van de toekomst tegemoet te treden.

Het Canadese leger is verantwoordelijk voor de bewaking en veiligheid van Canadees grondgebied, de verdediging van Noord Amerika door NORAD, de nakoming van de NATO verplichtingen en internationale vredebewarende rollen.

Naast deze geheel militaire zaken verleent het Canadese leger ook hulp bij rampen, of dat nu een watersnood is, een bosbrand, olie-verontreining, of zoek- en reddingsacties. Wij leggen wegen aan en onderhouden ze, en we bouwen bruggen. We blijven een belangrijke rol spelen in de ontwikkeling van Canada.

We verschaffen training in meer dan 60 verschillende beroepen en meer dan 20 klasseringen. Een betaalde universiteitsopleiding is ook mogelijk voor hen die daarvoor in aanmerking komen.

Voor meerdere inlichtingen betreffende carrières in het leger voor jonge Canadezen kunt u het dichtsbijzijnde centrum voor recruten bezoeken of collect bellen. U kunt ons vinden op de gele bladzijden onder Recruiting.

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Voor een vrijblijvend advies bel:

Drs. W.R. Verhaag

kantoor: (416) 494-8600 **prive: (416) 766-9342**

Financial Concept Group Inc.
1220 Sheppard Ave., E., Ste. #403, Willowdale, ON M2K 2S5

Dutch

Persoverzicht

Carl D. Tuyl

Het is weer de tijd waarin de kerk zich bezint op de komst van de vredevorst. De wereld hunkert naar de verwerkelijking van Jesaja's vizioen: "dan zullen zij hun zwaarden tot ploegscharen omsmeden en hun speren tot snoeimessen; geen volk zal tegen een ander volk het zwaard opheffen, en zij zullen de oorlog niet meer leren." Trudeau heeft zich definitief geschaard in de rijen van de vredestichters, maar het resultaat van zijn vredesoffensief staat nog te bezien. Onvermoeid schijnbaar, reist hij de wereld af, in een poging om andere landen over te halen naar zijn streven. In Washington proberen ze Trudeau belachelijk te maken met verwijzingen naar Canadese militaire kapaciteit die inderdaad zo ongeveer gelijk staat met de legermacht van Lichtenstein, maar zoals Allan MacEachen al zei: dat betekent niet dat we geen bijdragen tot wereldvredè kunnen maken. Ook in Frankrijk liep Mitterand niet erg warm voor Trudeau's diplomatieke inspanningen. In Tokio werd onze prime-minister uiterst vriendelijk ontvangen, en vandaar zond hij een diplomatieke koerier naar Moskou en Peking nadat hij met een vooraanstaande Russiese diplomaat had overlegd. Hij heeft nog meer pijlen op zijn boog — niet zo'n goeie symboliese taal in verband met het beoogde doel — hij zoekt namelijk ook de steun van de Gemeenebest landen die in Delhi vergaderen.

In West Duitsland werd er gestemd voor de opstelling van nieuwe kernraketten, en de Amerikanen lieten er geen gras over groeien: de raketten waren een dag na de stemming al op weg. Grote en intense demonstraties vonden plaats in Bonn. Het heeft er alle schijn van dat noch Washington noch Moskou erg enthusiast zijn met Trudeau's bemiddeling. Het ontwapenings debat tussen die twee landen verloopt met de snelheid van bevroren stroop maar ze schijnen het niet vlugger te willen, en buiten-standers zijn niet welkom. Er is bovendien een zekere mate van onzekerheid in beide kampen, die volgens mij ook een remming veroorzaakt in de besprekingen: wie wordt Amerika's president, en hoe zit het met de onzichtbare Andropov? Dat zijn onzekerheden die niet bijdragen tot een sneller tempo in de besprekingen.

Op het gebied van buitenlandse politiek is er ook in het beleid voor het nabije Oosten een geringe maar niet onbelangrijke verschuiving in Canada's huidige positie. Onze Minister voor Buitenlandse Zaken, Allan MacEachen, vertolkte een duidelijk waarneembare sympathy met tenminste sommige standpunt-en van de Arabiese landen. De Joodse gemeenschap ontging het niet en ze protesteerden onverwijld.

In Ottawa tikt een klok die volgens het Bureau voor de Statistiek met grote nauwkeurigheid het aantal bewoners van Canada vermeld. Op Maandag 21 November, om tien over negen in de morgen, bereikte die klok vijf-en-twintig miljoen. Mocht die vijf-en-twintig miljoenste inwoner van het mannelijk geslacht zijn geweest dan staat er voor hem de gemiddelde leeftijd van twee-en zeventig jaar en een paar weken te wachten, was het echter een lid van het vrouwelijk geslacht dan was de gemiddelde leeftijdsverwachting: negen-en zeventig jaar plus een paar maanden.

In de Noord-Westelijke gebieden werd een verkiezing gehouden zonder politieke partijen. Afgevaardigden worden lid van een soort tweede rangs Raad van Bestuur die direkt onder het gezag van Ottawa staat. Het gebied bestrijkt een derde gedeelte van Canada's opper-vlakte en telt 47.000 inwoners. Het streven is naar provinciale status, maar er zal nog wel heel wat water over de dam moeten lopen voordat het zo ver is.

Een als U maar steeds geen post krijgt van uw familie in Nederland dan komt dat waarschijnlijk niet omdat de familie U eensklaps verloochent heeft maar omdat tante Pos in Holland op z'n elf-en-dertigst draait. Men werkt naar stiptheid; zo wordt dat genoemd. Het is natuurlijk een verbloemde staking. Ook het openbare vervoer heeft te leiden van het stiptheids principe. En we hebben ook nog geen nieuws omtrent de heer Heineken die zoals U weet ontvoerd is.

Het is, zoals mijn lezers weten, de goede gewoonte om deze rubriek te besluiten met inlichtingen die nergens anders verkrijgbaar zijn, en zo wil ik deze week bijdragen tot de algemene ontwikkeling van Calvinist Contact lezers door U mee te delen dat vlooien geen vleugels hebben, maar dat daarentegen krekels wel voorzien zijn van oren die ze op hun benen dragen. Kom daar nou 's om in andere kranten. Die laten je gewoon in onwetenheid, nietwaar?

En in een naburige kerk arriveerde een nogal ambitieuze dominee. Zijn gemeente liep nogal uiteen. Veel rijken en veel armen, en niet veel daartussen. De dominee zei tegen z'n vrouw dat hij alle rijken zou bewegen tot het geven van geld aan de armen. Toen er een paar maanden verlopen waren vroeg z'n vrouw hoe 't met zijn verdelingsprogramma ging. "Heel goed", zei de dominee, "ik heb al 50 % sukses. "Hoe zo," vroeg z'n vrouw. "Wel" antwoordde de dominee, "de armen hebben beloofd het geld te zullen aannemen."

Voor Mr. & Mrs. Libertucci betekent de verbouwing tot huurwoningen een extra inkomen.

Boven de winkel van de Libertucci's is ruimte die slechts gedeeltelijk gebruikt wordt.

Maar binnenkort zullen Mr. & Mrs. Libertucci het laten verbouwen tot 2 comfortabele appartementen. Dat betekent een aardig extra inkomen voor de Libertucci's en een aanvulling van zo nodige huur-woningen voor Ontario.

Het programma Convert-to-Rent (Verbouwing tot huurwoningen) van de regering van Ontario dat in de maak is voor enkele uitgekozen centra - maakt dit soort verbouwingen mogelijk met een 15-jarige rentevrije lening van $7000 per woning.

De Libertucci's kregen ook volledige medewerking van hun plaatselijke overheid. Het veranderen van niet-residentiële ruimte in gematigde huurwoningen is in het belang van iedereen.

En dat is precies het doel van Convert-to-Rent ... het verbouwen van ongebruikte ruimte in woonruimte.

Kunnen we u helpen?

Bezit of beheert u niet-residentiele gebouwen die zoals deze veranderd zouden kunnen worden?

Boven een winkel? In een ongebruikte school of magazijn? Zelfs boven een winkelcentrum? Bel dan Mrs. Toni Farley op (416) 585-6391 gedurende kantoortijd (bel collect indien u buiten Toronto woont), voor volledige informatie betreffende Convert-to-Rent.

Er wacht u misschien een extra inkomen.

CONVERT-TO-RENT

Laat geld en fantasie samengaan.

Ontario

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Claude Bennett, Minister
William Davis, Premier

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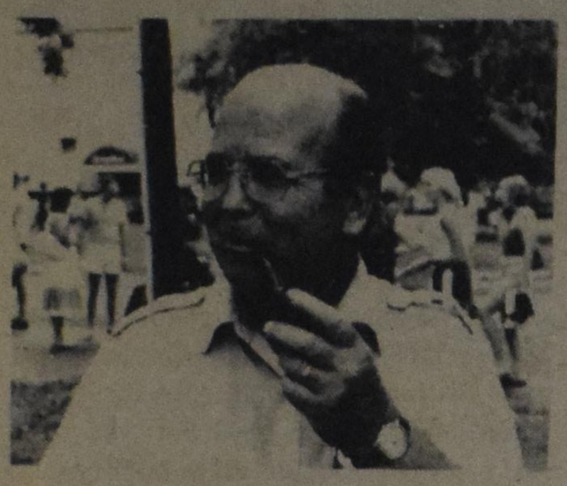
Wet ter bescherming van kinderen

(Canadian Scene) — Sinds 1 November moeten kinderen in auto's veiligheidsbanden om hebben of in een kinderzitje zitten. De wet, die betrekking heeft op alle kinderen onder de vijf jaar, bepaalt het volgende: Kinderen, tot een gewicht van 9 kg. moeten in een zitje zitten met het gezicht naar achteren; kleuters van 9 kg. tot 18 kg. moeten in een zitje reizen met het gezicht naar voren; alle andere kinderen in deze leeftijdsgroep tussen de 13 en 23 kg. moeten een schoot riem dragen. Tot het einde van dit jaar wordt er door de Regering van Ontario geen belasting geheven op kinder zitjes.

Van Halsema's Onthullingen



Herman De Jong

Uit hogen hemel daalt hij neer

Zo sta ik dan, toch nog weer met knikkende knieën, voor de klas. Eigenlijk twee klassen in één lokaal, want een aardige juffrouw met een leuk wipneusje heeft gevraagd of haar leerlingen mee mochten luisteren. Daarom zitten er twee lichaampjes in een een-mans bankje, en dat geeft natuurlijk aanleiding tot genoeg gekrakeel en geroezemoes. Net als hun voorvaderen laten deze kinderen zich zo maar niet opschuiven. Bovendien moeten een paar meisjes naast een paar jochies zitten, en dat is aanleiding tot verwoed gefluit, zodat je maar eens weer kunt zien dat ook deze christelijke school een prima leerschool voor het leven is.

De meester en de juf trekken zich niet veel aan van al dat lawaai. Ze gaan lekker naast elkaar zitten, natuurlijk niet in een bank, dat zou maar aanstoot geven. Ze springen op een tamelijk hoge boekenkast achter in het lokaal en bengelen hun benen prettig voor zich uit.

Uiterlijk bedaard maar innerlijk trillend door een vleugje zenuwachtigheid, trek ik mijn bril van de neus, mijn zakdoek uit mijn zak, en ga mijn glaasjes maar eens poetsen. Vorsend kijk ik over de hoofdjes. Ruggen trekken zich recht, gezichtjes krijgen een plechtstatige uitdrukking, handen vouwen zich. Dat denk ik tenminste, want zonder bril kan ik nog geen meter voor me uit zien. Ik zucht eens: ja-ja, bedenk dan dat ik in Canada ben en verander het in yes-yes, wat nogal stom klinkt, en daarom zet ik maar gauw de bril weer op.

Warempel, daar zitten ze, als wijlen de Synode van Dordt plechtig en vroom de gloedvolle rede van een Gomarus af te wachten. Kleinzoon Carl's snoet krijgt iets verhevens over zich. Leuk zoals zijn ogen van links naar rechts flitsen om te zien of ze allemaal wel een luisterende houding hebben aangenomen.

Er zit een klein jochie naast mijn kleinzoon. Lijkt sprekend op ... op .... Dan weet ik het. Daar zit het evenbeeld van Johan Lefferts, een vriendje uit mijn jeugdjaren. Ik ben even van streek. Flitsen van jeugdherinneringen schieten door mijn brein als helverlichte dias. Ik zit in een kerk, nee, een kathedraal, en een jongens-sopraan zingt "Uit hogen hemel daalt hij neer." Dan zie ik die mooiste "Eerste Kerstdagmorgen" van mijn kinderjaren weer voor me. Resoluut ban ik het verhaal, hoe ik vroeger eens in een klein Fokkertje onder de Moerdijkbrug vloog — alles uit mijn duim gezogen natuurlijk-, uit mijn gedachten. Het zal een Kerstverhaal worden. Niet zo spannend als het andere verhaal waarschijnlijk, maar daar is niets aan te doen.

Hoe deze Opa zo maar een verhaal in het Engels kan vertellen? Dat zal ik u later wel eens vertellen.

Het gebeurde in het jaar 1920. Ik was toen twaalf jaar, en een paar maanden voor Kerst kwam Johan naast ons wonen en al gauw werden we vriendjes. Onze ouders raakten ook bevriend, hoewel de Lefferts Rooms en mijn ouders Gereformeerd waren. Toch konden ze prima met elkaar overweg, misschien wel omdat de noordelijke Katholieken, in de minderheid zijnde, en vanwege hun Saksische natuur, zich iets minder aantrokken van de Pauselijke uitspraken. Mijn moeder wist zich te herinneren dat de Lefferts, onder anderen niet geloofden in het vagevuur en de hemelvaart van Maria, en dat vond moeder al heel wat. Het waren echt gelovige, blijde Christenen, die zich geborgen wisten in het bloed van Jezus Christus, en daarom hadden Johan's ouders en de mijne genoeg aanknopingspunten gedurende hun visites over en weer.

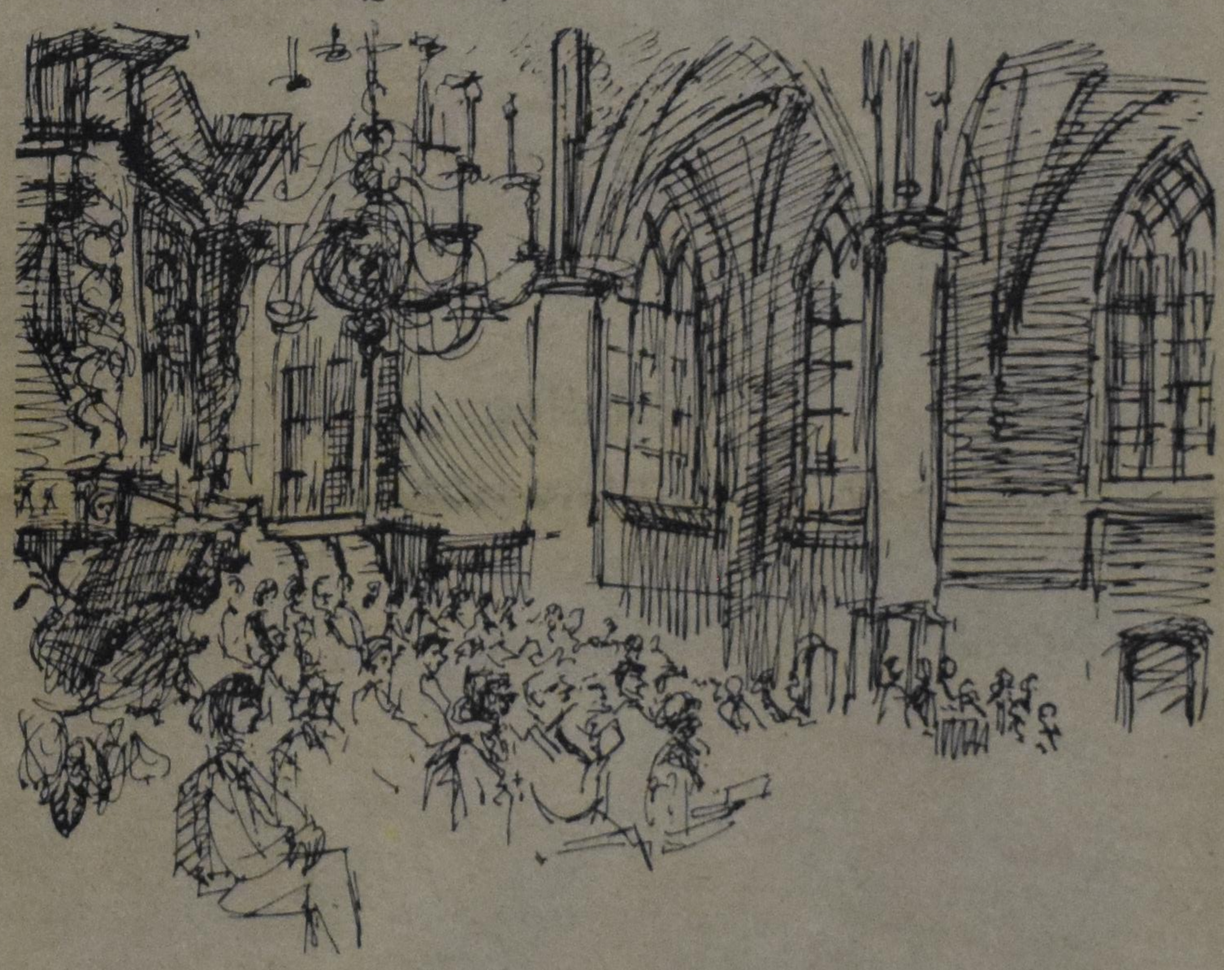
De dag voor het Kerstfeest had ik mijn ouders gevraagd of ik met mijn vriendje naar de Eerste Kerstdag vroegmis mocht. Ik had verwacht dat vader dat zo maar eventjes goed zou vinden, maar dat viel erg tegen. Ofschoon het hekje tussen beide huizen van de grendels der geloofsverwijdering ontdaan waren en dus een echt ecumenisch hekje was geworden, ging het vader toch wel te ver om elkaars kerken te gaan bezoeken.

Zoals gewoonlijk hakte moeder de knoop door. Ze bracht naar voren dat onze eigen kerstdiensten nu niet bepaald zó aantrekkelijk waren voor mij, behalve dan de tweede kerstdag middagdienst waarin de Zondagschool kinderen een versje mochten zingen en dan beloond werden met een sinaasappel.

Ze vertelde vader in duidelijke termen dat onze oude dominee misschien nimmer van "Adventstijd" gehoord had, omdat de eerste kerstdag preken zich bezig hielden met de O.T. professiën, de tweede kerstdagmorgen met de aan - kondiging, om dan in de middagdienst aandacht te schenken aan Jezus' geboorte. Volgens moeder werd de Heer geboren de nacht voor het Kerstfeest en daarom was het aanbevelenswaardig om zijn geboorte zo spoedig mogelijk te gedenken. "Hoe zou jij het vinden", zei ze, "als ik een dag na je verjaardag, nadat je 's middags terugkwam van je werk, jouw je verjaardagscadeau zou geven?" Daar had vader niet van terug, en omdat men alle dingen moet onderzoeken, gaf hij aarzelend — ik had immers de leeftijd van het logische denken nog niet bereikt- zijn toestemming.

Om vijf uur op kerstdagmorgen lopen Johan en ik door de warrelende sneeuw. Ik op klompen vanwege een bezorgde moeder. Johan heeft hoge rijschoenen aan, vanwege een moeder die weet dat het ongepast zou zijn om het nieuwgeboren kind op klompen eer te bewijzen.

De sneeuw 'bakt,' en de twee kleine figuurtjes in hun duffelse jekkertjes hebben op dat moment weinig aandacht voor de heilige morgen. Ze gaan een wedstrijd aan wie de hoogste sneeuwklompen kan krijgen. Voetje voor voetje gaan we verder, anders verlies je de aangeworven sneeuw. Ik win het steeds, omdat het hout van de klompen meer adhesie-vermogen heeft dan het leer van de schoenen.



Maar Johan is een venijnig kereltje. Hij moet het winnen. Zijn stapjes worden steeds kleiner en voorzichtiger, het blosje op zijn wangen steeds dieper." 't Is oneerlijk," zegt hij dan, "ik kan het best van jou winnen, als ik ook klompen aan had." Ik antwoordde, wat pocherig: "Ik zou het nog van je winnen als ik jou schoenen aan had."

Zo kan het gebeuren dat we, midden op de Dwingeloo weg, neer zitten in de sneeuw. Ik wacht geduldig totdat Johan eindelijk de veters los heeft. Dan ruilen we. Maar voordat we onze wedstrijd voort kunnen zetten komt er een grote Roomse familie uit een van de huizen. Een meisje roept, "Hè, Johan, jullie mogen wel opschieten, want de dienst begint over vijf minuten, en jij moet je ook nog verkleden in je koorkleed. Wij zijn ook al laat, want onze moeder heeft zich verslapen."

Dus rennen we achter de grote schare aan, en net op tijd doemt de kathedraal op in de schemer van de vroege morgen. Zwarte figuren reppen zich over de blanke sneeuw, onder de gele gloed van de gaslantarens langs het trottoir. "Jij moet door de grote deur," hijgt Johan, "ik moet door de deur van de sacristie, want ik zing in het Koor."

Ik laat me meevoeren door de mensen rondom me, en kom terecht in de narthex van de afgeladen volle kerk. Achter rijkbewerkte tralies verdringen zich de Protestantse bezoekers, om toch vooral niets te missen van wat te wachten staat. We staan als haringen in een ton en de zure, kamferachtige lucht van zware winter jassen vermengt zich met de eigenaardige geur die destijds in alle Rooms-Katholieke kerken hing.

Ik sta dicht bij de ingang en zie mensen hun handen dopen in een nog al vies cementen bakje om dan een vlug kruisje te maken. Dat zal ik ook dan maar doen, maar een lange man met een vreselijk lange neus waaraan een druppel hangt, bijt me toe: afblijven met je fikke, jij bent, niet Rooms, wel?" Ik ben nooit gewaar geworden of een Rooms of Protestants iemand me dat toeblafte.

Verschrikt duik ik terug in de harington, en wurm me onder de armen der mystiek aangelegde Protestanten door totdat ik eindelijk het traliehek bereikt heb. Net op tijd. Een soort Sinterklaas staat voor het altaar en buigt zo diep dat zijn neus haast de vloer moet raken. Johan zie ik nergens. Ik bedenk plotseling dat hij mijn klompen nog aan heeft. Heeft hij tenminste lekkere warme voeten, want de mijne in Johan's schoenen zijn ijselijk koud. Ik zou wel willen trappelen, maar de eerbied en de stenen vloer weerhouden me er van.

Plotseling begint het orgel te dreunen. Vreselijk hard, maar dat zal wel komen omdat ik er precies onder sta. De mensen voor me gaan staan en beginnen te zingen. De melodie ken ik niet. Ik weet dat het een geweldige indruk op mij maakte. Het geluid lijkt langs de witgekalkte muren te klimmen, steeds hoger en hoger, om dan als een soort echo naar beneden te duikelen om zich weer te vermengen met de forse melodie. Ik weet niet of ik sta te rillen van de kou of van ontroering.

Het is waarschijnlijk mijn eerste schoonheids-ervaring geweest. Van de

Continued on page 24 ...

Uit hogen hemel daalt hij neer

Continued from page 23.

mis is mij niet veel bijgebleven. Er werd een vreemde taal gesproken en van de handelingen van de pastoor begreep ik niet veel. Eigenlijk viel me de hele zaak wat tegen en ... het duurde haast nog langer dan onze eigen kerkdiensten. Bovendien was ik steenkoud, ondanks de goede voorzorgen van mijn moeder. Pas tegen het einde van de dienst gebeurde er iets dat ik mijn leven lang heb onthouden.

Het orgel begon heel zachtjes te neurien en toen klonk er een meisjesstem door de kathedraal. Ik merkte wel dat iedereen plotseling begon te luisteren. Het gekraak van de stoelen hield op, en de mensen achter me staakten hun gefluisterde conversatie. O, wat was dat mooi! "Uit Hoge Hemel daalt gij neer, Eia, Eia ...."

Ik hield mijn adem in. De ijle meisjesstem scheen toch de hele kerk te vullen. Het leek door de ruimte te vliegen als een lichte zwaluw. Het weerkaatste van de muren en naarmate de melodie hoger werd scheen het te verdwijnen tussen de hoog toegespitse bogen om verder te zweven in de lucht, totdat het een engelenkoor werd, zo mooi ... zo mooi. Ik kan het allemaal niet precies zo uitleggen, ik heb er geen woorden voor.

Naast me hoorde ik een nogal dikke dame vreemde geluiden maken. Ik keek op en zag dat ze huilde. Toen merkte ik dat ik zelf ook warme tranen over mijn koude wangen voelde biggelen. En dat, terwijl ik ineens zo blij werd. Zo blij, dat ik met de herders over de heuvels rondom Betlehem had willen hollen, armen maaiend als molenwieken, vlugger, vlugger, om Jezus te zien, mijn Jezus.

Ik heb later vaak gedacht dat het hele Kerstgebeuren pas realiteit voor mij is geworden terwijl ik ademloos de lichte zwaluw volgde tot ver buiten de kathedraal. Ik wist het zo diep-zeker toen, dat Jezus voor mij kwam als een Kind, voor mij stierf als een Man. Later in mijn leven, als ik me moest worstelen door de dieptepunten van mijn geloofsleven, veroorzaakt door twijfel, of welvaart, of gedachtenloos leven, ben ik vaak in mijn gedachten teruggekeerd naar die grote kerk, en terwijl mijn handen zich wit-klemden rond de stijlen van het traliehek, heeft een troostende Heiland me weer die stem doen horen, die ijle meisjesstem .... Uit Hogen Hemel daal Ik neer!

Bij de deur van de sacristie wachtte ik op Johan. "Nou, hoe vond je het?" vroeg hij. Hij wachtte niet op antwoord, maar trok me door de deur naar binnen. Onder een Mariabeeld met veel kaarsjes verwisselden we van schoeisel. Ik volgde zijn voorbeeld toen hij een kruisje sloeg. "Hoef je heus niet te doen, hoor," zei Johan," Jij bent toch geen Roomse?".

Een paar dagen later was Johan hard ziek, longontsteking. Hij had zijn klompen, mijn klompen afgeschopt terwijl hij het koorkleed over z'n hoofd trok. Was toen op natte kousen achter de bisschop de kerk binnen gelopen naar het koorgedeelte. Ook daar was een stenen vloer .....

Ik ging zwijgend door het huis. Voelde me schuldig aan Johan's ziekte. Voelde me verlaten omdat mijn beste vriendje nou net ziek moest zijn gedurende de Kerstvacantie. Aan tafel, na het eten, baden we voor hem. Hij moest wel erg ziek zijn want vader's gebed werd steeds dringender.

Mevrouw Lefferts, bleek en vermoeid van hele nachten op wezen, komt aan de deur. Johan wil zo graag dat ik bij hem kom. Ik voel me verlicht en vraag: "Wordt Johan dan beter, mevrouw?" Zachtjes zegt ze: "Bij de Heer is alles mogelijk, kom nu maar gauw."

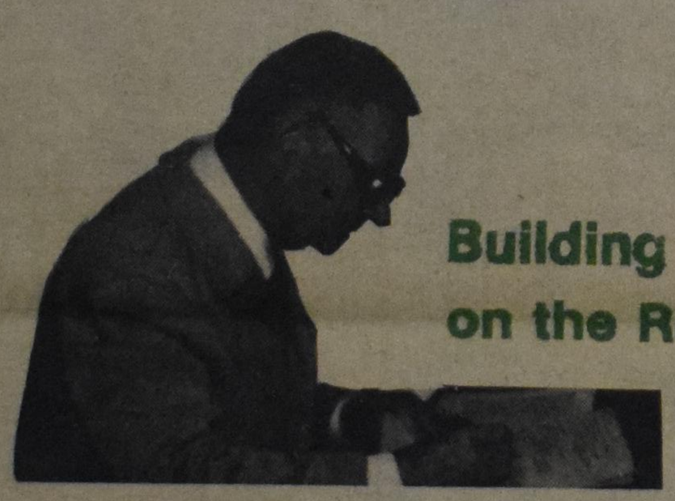
Johan lag beneden in de warme huiskamer. We waren wat verlegen eerst, maar al gauw was het weer als vanouds. Johan sprak moeilijk omdat hij zo moest hijgen. Ongemerkt kwam ons gesprek op de vroegmis. Ik vertelde hem dat het meisje zo prachtig gezongen had. "Dat was geen meisje," fluisterde Johan. Ik zei dat een jongen nooit zo mooi zou kunnen zingen. Johan glimlachte. "Jawel hoor," zei hij, "luister maar eens." Tot mijn verbazing begon hij zacht te zingen. Dezelfde stem, dezelfde melodie. Schalks keek hij naar me op, geheel buiten adem. "Nou?" Zijn stem was zo zacht dat ik hem amper hoorde. Toen vertelde ik hem wat ik gevoeld had terwijl hij in de kerk zong.

Wat verlegen nam ik zijn witte hand in de mijne. Eigenlijk ging dat van hem uit, want hij schoof zijn hand naar mij toe. Ik zei dat ik veel voor hem bad en dat ik Jezus heel lief had en dat ik nu heel zeker wist dat Jezus hem beter zou maken en dat ... Hij kneep mijn hand en zei zachtjes: "Uit hoge hemel daalt Hij neer voor Jan en Johan."

"Johan is beter geworden," vertel ik de klas. "We zijn vrienden gebleven voor een lange tijd. Toen heb ik hem uit het oog verloren, totdat ik zijn overlijdensbericht zag. Een Rooms overlijdensbericht met een kruis en: In Jezus ontslapen na het laatste Sacrament ontvangen te hebben.

Kleinzoon Carl kijkt de klas rond. Zijn ogen stralen van trots. Het kleine jochie naast hem steekt de hand omgoog. Hij vraagt of we de hymn, "From Heaven above to earth I come" mogen zingen. Dat is goed. En ik vind het juist fijn dat hij die zo op Johan Lefferts lijkt het voorstel doet.

Het klinkt voor mij niet zo mooi als die eerste keer, dat moet ik wel zeggen. Maar misschien is het anders voor de kinderen. Ik hoop wel dat kleine Carl en zijn vriendjes een soortgelijke ervaring mogen hebben hier in Canada. Want ja, Jezus is ook uit de hoge hemel gedaald om in Canada te wonen, niet waar?



Building on the Rock

Rev. H. Van Andel

Christmas

I have come to ...
Matthew 5:17

When Jesus says: "I have come to fulfill the law," he speaks of himself. Even more, he reveals himself as the promised Messiah who had come into this world.

He had already pointed to himself in verse 11 of our chapter. There he spoke of persecution "on his account." That had been the first testimony on himself in the Sermon on the Mount.

Later in this sermon he repeatedly said: "I say to you, I tell you."

We must notice this self-revelation of Jesus.

The gospel is filled with testimonies of Jesus in which he claimed to be the Christ who was sent by the Father. We think of the many words in which he presented himself as the great "I am." He said: "I am the good shepherd, I am the door, I am the light of the world, I am the resurrection and the life, I am the true vine."

Finally, when he was tried by the Sanhedrin, Caiaphas asked him to declare on oath whether he was the Christ, the Son of God. He answered: "You have said so."

Do you know what the comfort is of all these self-testimonies of Jesus for us? It is that we confess much more than a doctrine. We confess a person, a living person who came in order to dwell with us and who still says to us today: "I am."

We confess one with whom we can have fellowship, who still is our intercessor in heaven and whom we may expect on the clouds.

Other founders of religions have died and left only a doctrine to live by. Buddha is dead, Mohammed is dead, but Jesus came to be and to remain our living Saviour.

Celebrating Christmas is not just remembering the birth of the Founder of Christianity. When we sing: "O come, let us adore him," we bow our knees for him who is the same yesterday, today and forever.

SEET-za BYOON-ing

His name would be a household word by now—if only people knew how to pronounce it. We've heard SITZ-a, SEETS, and SIGHTS, along with BOON-ing and BUNN-ing. Some Calvin Chimes wag made up "Sitz a-Burning," and we once received an order for "that Bunny bock."

Sietze has plenty of humor in his books. All this extra funny business has to stop or his admirers, fearing the embarassment of mispronunciation, will hesitate to start exciting conversations about their favorite author. So remember, "Sietze" rhymes with "pizza." Here's a little more help:

Purpaleanie: PURR-pa-LEE-nee. To learn what the word means, you'll have to read Sietze's book by that title, now in its fourth printing and still going like saucijzes at a church picnic. It's $5.95, cassette, $5.25.

Permutation: PURR-mew-TA-shun. That's a thorough change or transformation. It has nothing to do with cats. It's Sietze's second book, **Style and Class**, that has the wonderful story about cats in it. It's $7.95. The book includes a glossary that explains such important terms as CRC, RCA, collection plate, dominie, Frisian, hog ring, huisbezoek, and tiddlywinks.

We pay postage on prepaid orders, including orders sent as gifts. We also have **Letters from Occupied Japan** by Henry Zylstra and **Sign of a Promise** by James C. Schaap, each $6.95.

Prices assume U.S. funds.

Watch for news about the Style and Class contest!

Middleburg Press Box 166 Orange City, Iowa 51041